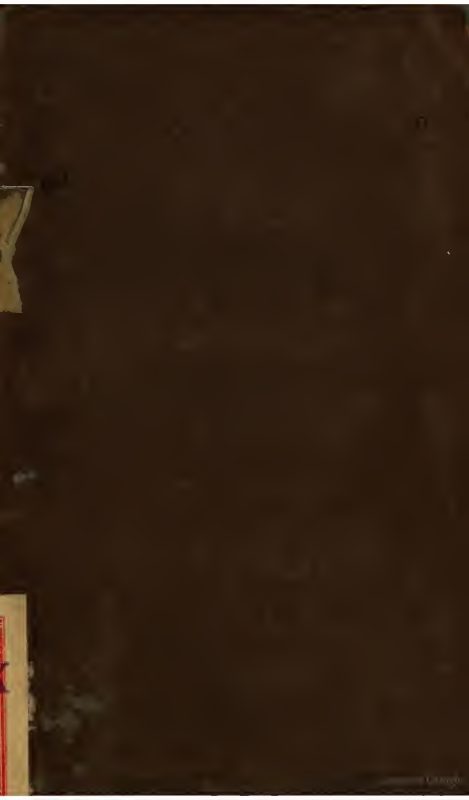




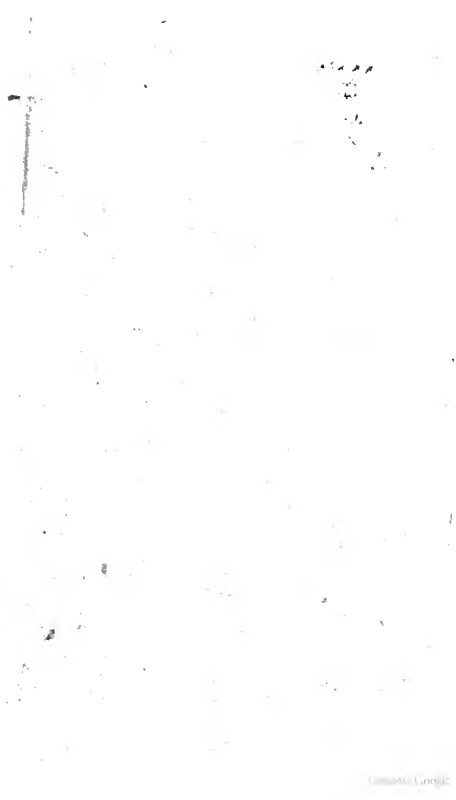
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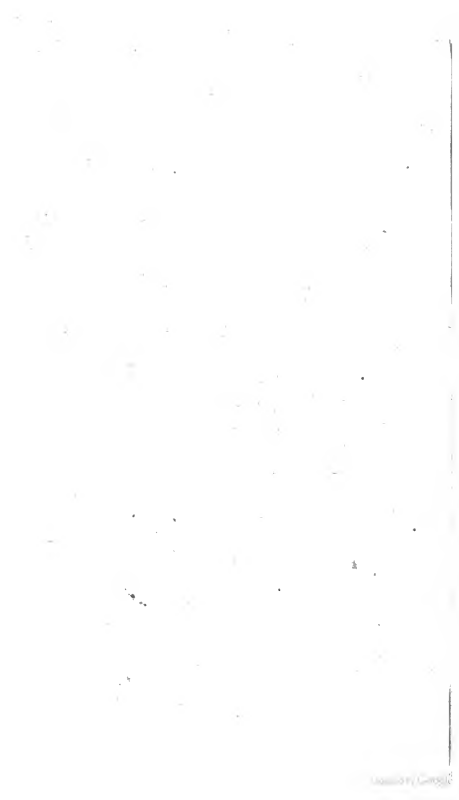
XX XIX

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APOLI





THE
IL IAD
OF
HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK
By ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



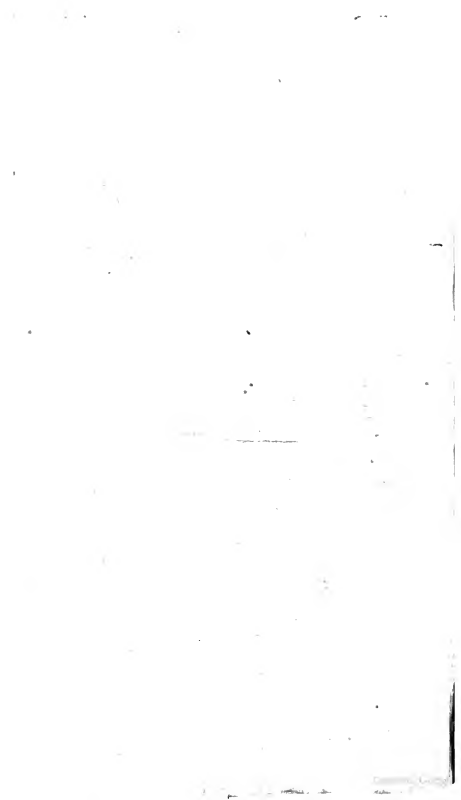
*Te sequor, O Graia gentis decus! inque tuis nunc
Fixa pedum pono pressis vestigia signis:
Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem.
Quod te imitari audeb*

LUCRET.

Berwick:
PRINTED BY H. RICHARDSON.

1807.





THE
I L I A D.
BOOK XIII.

The Argument.

*The fourth battle continued, in which Neptune assists the
Greeks. The acts of Idomeneus.*

NEPTUNE, concerned for the loss of the Grecians, upon seeing the fortification forced by Hector, who had entered the gate near the station of the Ajaxes, assumes the shape of Calchas, and inspires those heroes to oppose him : then, in the form of the generals, encourages the other Greeks who had retired to their vessels. The Ajaxes form their troops in a close phalanx, and put a stop to Hector and the Trojans. Several deeds of valour are performed ; Meriones, losing his spear in the encounter, repairs to seek another at the tent of Idomeneus : this occasions a conversation between these two warriors, who return together to the battle. Idomeneus signals his courage above the rest ; he kills Othryoneas, Asius, and Alcathous : Deiphobus and Æneas march against him, and at length Idomeneus retires. Menelaus wounds Helenus, and kills Pisanter. The Trojans are repulsed in the left wing : Hector still keeps his ground against the Ajaxes, till being galled by the Locrian slingers and archers, Polydamas advises to call a council of war : Hector approves his advice, but goes first to rally the Trojans ; upbraids Paris, rejoins Polydamas, meets Ajax again, and renews the attack.

The eight and twentieth day still continues. The scene is between the Grecian wall and the sea-shore.

WHEN now the thund'rer on the sea beat coast
Had fix'd great Hector and his conqu'ring host ;
VOL. II. A

He left them to the fates, in bloody fray
 To toil and struggle thro the well-fought day.
 Then turn'd to Thracia from the field of fight, 5
 Those eyes that shed insufferable light,
 To where the Mysians prove their martial force,
 And hardy Thracians tame the savage horse !
 And where the far-fam'd Hippemolgian strays,
 Renown'd for justice and for length of days. 10
 Thrice happy race ! that, innocent of blood,
 From milk, innoxious, seek their simple food :
 Jove sees delighted ; and avoids the scene
 Of guilty Troy, of arms, and dying men :
 No aid he deems to either host is giv'n, 15
 While his high law suspends the pow'rs of heav'n.
 Meantime the *monarch of the watry main
 Observ'd the thund'rer, nor observ'd in vain.
 In Samethracia on a mountains brow,
 Whose waving woods o'erhung the deeps below, 20
 He sat ; and round him cast his azure eyes,
 Where Ida's misty tops confus'dly rise ;
 Below, fair Ilion's glitt'ring spires were seen ;
 The crowded ships, and sable seas between.
 There, from the crystal chambers of the main, 25
 Emerg'd, he sat, and mourn'd the Argives slain.
 At Jove incens'd, with grief and fury stung,
 Prone down the rocky steep he rush'd along ;
 Fierce as he past, the lofty mountains' nod,
 The forests shake ! earth trembled as he trode, 30
 And felt the footsteps of th' immortal god.
 From realm to realm three ample strides he took,
 And, at the fourth, the distant Ægæ shook.
 Far in the bay his shining palace stands,
 Eternal frame ! not rais'd by mortal hands : 35
 Thus having reach'd, his brass-hoof'd steeds he reins,
 Fleet as the winds, and deck'd with golden manes.
 Refulgent arms his mighty limbs infold ;
 Immortal arms, of adamant and gold.
 He mounts the car, the golden scourge applies, 40
 He sits superior, and the chariot flies :
 His whirling wheels the glassy surface sweep ;
 Th' enormous monsters, rolling o'er the deep,

* Neptune.

Gambol around him on the wat'ry way ;
 And heavy whales in aukward measures play : 45
 The sea subsiding spreads a level plain,
 Exults, and owns the monarch of the main ;
 The parting waves before his coursers fly :
 The wond'ring waters leave his axle dry.
 Deep in the liquid regions lies a cave ; 50 }
 Between where Tenedos the surges lave,
 And rocky Imbrus breaks the rolling wave : }
 There the great ruler of the azure round
 Stopt his swift chariot, and his steeds unbound,
 Fed with ambrosial herbage from his hand, 55
 And link'd their fetloks with a golden band,
 Infrangible, immortal : there they stay.
 The father of the floods pursues his way ;
 Where like a tempest dark'ning heav'n around,
 Or fiery deluge that devours the ground, 60
 Th' impatient Trojans, in a gloomy throng,
 Embatel'd roll'd, as Hector rush'd along.
 To the loud tumult and the barb'rous cry,
 The heav'ns re-echo, and the shores reply ;
 They vow destruction to the Grecian name, 65
 And in their hopes the fleets already flame.
 But Neptune, rising from the seas profound,
 The god whose earthquakes rock the solid ground,
 Now wears a mortal form ; like Calchas seen,
 Such his loud voice, and such his manly mien ; 70
 His shouts incessant ev'ry Greek inspire,
 But most th' Ajaxes, adding fire to fire.
 'Tis your's, O warriors, all our hopes to raise ;
 Oh recollect your ancient worth and praise !
 'Tis your's to save us, if you cease to fear ; 75
 Flight, more than shameful, is destructive here.
 On other works tho' Troy with fury fall,
 And pour her armies o'er our batter'd wall :
 There, Greece has strength : but this, this part o'er-
 thrown,
 Her strength were vain ; I dread for you alone. 80
 Here Hector rages like the force of fire,
 Vaunts of his gods, and calls high Jove his sire.
 If yet some heav'nly pow'r your breast excite,
 Breathe in your hearts, and string your arms to fight,

Greece yet may live, her threaten'd fleet maintain, 85
And Hector's force, and Jove's own aid, be vain.

Then with his sceptre that the deep controuls,
He touch'd the chiefs, and steel'd their manly souls :
Strength, not their own, the touch divine imparts,
Prompts their light limbs, and swells their daring hearts.
Then as a falcon from the rocky height, 90

Her quarry seen, impetuous at the sight
Forth springing instant, darts herself from high,
Shoots on the wing, and skims along the sky ;
Such, and so swift, the pow'r of ocean flew ; 95
The wide horizon shut him from their view.

Th' inspiring god, Oileus' active son
Perceiv'd the first, and thus to Telamon.

Some god, my friend, some god in human form,
Fav'ring descends, and wills to stand the storm. 100
Not Calchas this, the venerable seer ;
Short as he turn'd, I saw the power appear :
I mark'd his parting, and the steps he trode :
His own bright evidence reveals a god.

Ev'n now some energy divine I share, 105
And seem to walk on wings, and tread in air !

With equal ardour, Telamon returns,
My soul is kindled, and my bosom burns :
New rising spirits all my force alarm,
Lift each impatient limb, and brace my arm. 110
This ready arm, unthinking, shakes the dart :
The blood pours back, and fortifies my heart :
Singly, methinks, yon tow'ring chief I meet,
And stretch the dreadful Hector at my feet.

Full of the god that urg'd their burning breast, 115
The heroes thus their mutual warmth exprest.
Neptune meanwhile the routed Greeks inspir'd ;
Who breathless, pale, with length of labours tir'd,
Pant in the ships : while Troy to conquest calls,
And swarms victorious o'er their yielding walls : 120
Trembling before th' impending storm they lie,
While tears of rage stand burning in their eye.
Greece sunk they thought, and this their fatal hour :
But breathe new courage as they fell the pow'r.
Teucer and Leitus first his words excite : 125
Then stern Peneleus rises to the fight :

Thoas, Deipyrus, in arms renown'd,
And Merion next, th' impulsive fury found ;
Last Nestor's son the same bold ardour takes,
While thus the god the martial fire awakes. 130

Oh lasting infamy ! oh dire disgrace
To chiefs of vig'rous youth, and manly race !
I trusted in the gods, and you, to see
Brave Greece victorious, and her navy free ;
Ah no—the glorious combat you disclaim, 135
And one black day clouds all her former fame.

Heav'ns ! what a prodigy these eyes survey,
Unseen, unthought, till this amazing day !
Fly we at length from 'Troy's oft conquer'd bands ?
And falls our fleet by such inglorious hands ? 140

A rout undisciplin'd, a straggling train,
Not born to glories of the dusty plain ;
Like frightened fawns from hill to hill pursu'd,
A prey to ev'ry savage of the wood :

Shall these, so late, who trembled at your name, 145
Invade your camps, involve your ships in flame ?
A change so shameful, say, what cause has wrought ? .

The soldiers baseness, or the gen'ral's fault ?
Fools ! will ye perish for your leader's vice ?
'The purchase infamy, and life the price ! 150

'Tis not your cause, Achilles' injur'd fame :
Another's is the crime, but your's the shame.
Grant that our chief offend thro' rage or lust,
Must you be cowards, if your king's unjust ?
Prevent this evil, and your country save : 155

Small thoughts retrieves the spirits of the brave.
Think, and subdue ! on dastards dead to fame
I waste no anger, for they feel no shame :
But you, the pride, the flow'r of all our host,
My heart weeps blood to see your glory lost ! 160

Nor deem this day, this battle, all you lose ;
A day more black, a fate more vile, ensues.
Let each reflect, who prizes fame or breath,
On endless infamy, on instant death.

For lo ! the fated time, th' appointed shore ; 165
Hark ! the gates burst, the brazen barriers roar !
Impetuous Hector thunders at the wall ;
The hour, the spot, to conquer, or to fall.

These words the Grecians fainting hearts inspire,
And list'ning armies catch the godlike fire, 170
Fix'd at his post was each bold Ajax found,
With well-rang'd squadrons strongly circled round :
So close their order, so dispos'd their fight,
As Pallas self might view with fix'd delight ;
Or had the god of war inclin'd his eyes, 175
The god of war had own'd a just surprize.
A chosen phalanx, firm, resolv'd as fate,
Descending Hector and his battle wait.
An iron scene gleams dreadful o'er the fields,
Armour in armour lock'd, and shields in shields, 180
Spears lean on spears, on targets targets throng,
Helms stuck to helms, and man drove man along,
'The floating plumes unnumber'd wave above,
As when an earthquake stirs the nodding grove ;
And levell'd at the skies with pointing rays, 185
Their brandish'd lances at each motion blaze.
Thus breathing death, in terrible array,
The close-compacted legions urg'd their way :
Fierce they drove on, impatient to destroy ;
Troy charg'd the first, and Hector first of Troy. 190
As from some mountain's craggy forehead torn,
A rock's round fragment flies, with fury borne,
(Which from the stubborn stone a torrent rends,)
Precipitate the pond'rous mass descends :
From steep to steep the rolling ruin bounds ; 195
At ev'ry shock the crackling wood resounds ;
Still gath'ring force, it smokes : and urg'd amain,
Whirls, leaps, and thunders down impetuous to the plain :
There stops—So Hector. Their whole force he prov'd,
Resistles when he rag'd, and when he stopt, unmov'd.
On him the war is bent, the darts are shed, 201
And all their faulchions wave around his head :
Repuls'd he stands, nor from his stand retires ;
But with repeated shouts his army fires.
Trojans ! be firm : this arm shall make your way 205
Thro' yon square body, and that black array :
Stand, and my spear shall rout their scatt'ring pow'r.
Strong as they seem, embattel'd like a tow'r.
For he that Juno's heav'nly bosom warms,
'The first of gods, this day inspires our arms. 210

He said, and rous'd the soul in ev'ry breast :
Urg'd with desire of fame, beyond the rest,
Forth march'd Deiphobus ; but marching, held
Before his wary steps his ample shield.
Bold Merion aim'd a stroke, nor aim'd it wide, 215
The glitt'ring jav'lin pierc'd the tough bull hide ;
But pierc'd not through ; unfaithful to his hand,
The point broke short and sparkled in the sand.
The Trojan warrior, touch'd with timely fear,
On the rais'd orb to distance bore the spear : 220
The Greek retreating mourn'd his frustrate blow,
And curs'd the treach'rous lance that spar'd a foe ;
Then to the ships with surly speed he went,
To seek a surer jav'lin in his tent.
Meanwhile with rising rage the battle glows, 225
The tumult thickens, and the clamour grows.
By Teucer's arm the warlike Imbrius bleeds,
The son of Mentor, rich in gen'rous steeds.
Ere yet to Troy the sons of Greece were led,
In fair Pedæus' verdant pastures bred, 230
The youth had dwelt ; remote from war's alarms,
And bless'd in bright Medesicaste's arms :
(This nymph, the fruit of Priam's ravish'd joy,
Ally'd the warrior to the house of Troy.)
To Troy, when glory call'd his arms, he came, 235
And match'd the bravest of her chiefs in fame ;
With Priam's sons, a guardian of the throne,
He liv'd, belov'd, and honour'd as his own.
Him Teucer pierc'd between the throat and ear :
He groans beneath the Telamonian spear. 240
As from some far-seen mountain's airy crown,
Subdu'd by steel, a tall ash tumbles down,
And soils its verdant tresses on the ground :
So falls the youth ; his arms the fall resound.
Then Teucer rushing to despoil the dead, 245
From Hector's hand a shining jav'lin fled :
He saw, and shun'd the death ; the forceful dart
Sung on, and pierc'd Amphinachus his heart,
Cecatus' son, of Neptune's boasted line :
Vain was his courage, and his race divine ! 250
Prostrate he falls ; his clanging arms resound,
And his broad buckler thunders on the ground.

To seize his beamy helm the victor flies,
 And just had fasten'd on the dazzling prize,
 When Ajax' manly arm a jav'lin flung; 255
 Full on the shields round boss the weapon rung;
 He felt the shock, nor more was doom'd to feel,
 Secure in mail, and sheath'd in shining steel.
 Repuls'd he yields; the victor Greeks obtain
 The spoils contested, and bear off the slain. 260
 Between the leaders of th' Athenian line,
 (Stichius the brave, Menestheus the divine,)
 Deplor'd Amphimachus, sad object! lies;
 Imbrius remains the fierce Ajaxes' prize.
 As two grim lions bear across the lawn, 265
 Snatch'd from devouring hounds, a slaughter'd fawn,
 In their fell jaws high lifting thro' the wood,
 And sprinkling all the shrubs with drops of blood;
 So these the chief: great Ajax from the dead
 Strips his bright arms, Oileus lops his head: 270
 Toss'd like a ball, and whirl'd in air away,
 At Hector's feet the goary visage lay.
 The god of ocean, fir'd with stern disdain,
 And pierc'd with sorrow for his * grandson slain,
 Inspires the Grecian hearts, confirms their hands, 275
 And breathes destruction on the Trojan bands.
 Swift as a whirlwind rushing to the fleet,
 He finds the lance-fam'd Idomen of Crete;
 His pensive brow the gen'rous care exprest
 With which a wounded soldier touch'd his breast, 280
 Whom in the chance of war a jav'lin tore,
 And his sad comrades from the battle bore;
 Him to the surgeons of the camp he sent:
 That office paid, he issu'd from his tent,
 Fierce for the fight: to him the god begun, 285
 In Thoa's voice, Andræmon's valiant son,
 Who rul'd where Calydou's white rocks arise,
 And Pleuron's chalky cliffs emblaze the skies.
 Where's now th' imperious vaunt the daring boast
 Of Greece victorious, and proud Ilion lost? 290
 To whom the king. On Greece no blame be thrown:
 Arms are her trade, and war is all her own.

* Amphimachus.

Her hardy heroes from the well fought plains
Nor fear with-holds, nor shameful sloth detains,
'Tis heav'n, alas ! and Jove's all pow'rful doom, 295
That far, far distant from our native home
Wills us to fall, inglorious ! Oh my friend !
Once foremost in the fight, still prone to lend
Or arms, or counsels ; now perform the best,
And what thou can'st not singly, urge the rest. 300

Thus he : and thus the god, whose force can make
The solid globe's eternal basis shake.
Ah ! never may he see his native land,
But feed the vultures on this hateful strand,
Who seeks ignobly in his ships to stay, 305
Nor dares to combat on this signal day !
For this, behold ! in horrid arms I shine,
And urge thy soul to rival acts with mine ;
Together let us battle on the plain ;
Two, not the worst ; nor ev'n this succour vain ; 310
Not vain the weakest if their force unite ;
But ours, the bravest have confest in fight.

This said, he rushes where the combat burns !
Swift to his tent the Cretan king returns.
From thence, two jav'lins glitt'ring in his hand, 315
And clad in arms that lighten'd all the strand,
Fierce on the foe th' impetuous hero drove :
Like lightning bursting from the arm of Jove,
Which to pale man the wrath of heav'n declares,
Or terrifies th' offending world with wars ; 320
In streaming sparkles, kindling all the skies,
From pole to pole the trial of glory flies.
Thus his bright armour o'er the dazzled throng
Gleam'd dreadful, as the monarch flash'd along.
Him, near his tent, Meriones attends ; 325
Whom thus he questions : Ever best of friends !
O say, in ev'ry art of battle skill'd,
What holds thy courage from so brave a field ?
On some important message art thou bound ?
Or bleeds my friend by some unhappy wound ? 330
Inglorious here, my soul abhors to stay,
And glows with prospects of th' approaching day.

O prince ! Meriones replies, whose care
Leads forth th' embattel'd sons of Crete to war ;

This speaks my grief ; this headless lance I wield, 335
The rest lies rooted in a Trojan shield.

To whom the Cretan : Enter, and receive
The wanted weapons ; those my tent can give ;
Spears I have store, (and Trojan lances all),
That shed a lustre round th' illumin'd wall. 340

Tho' I, disdainful of the distant war,
Nor trust the dart, nor aim th' uncertain spear,
Yet hand to hand I fight, and spoil the slain ;
And thence these trophies, and these arms I gain.
Enter, and see on heaps the helmets roll'd 345
And high-hung spears, and shields that flame with gold.

Nor vain said Merion, are our martial toils ;
We too can boast of no ignoble spoils.
But those my ship contains, whence distant far,
I fight conspicuous in the van of war, 350

What need I more ? If any Greek there be
Who knows not Merion, I appeal to thee.

To this, Idomeneus. The fields of fight
Have prov'd thy valour, and unconquer'd might ;
And were some ambush for the foes design'd, 355
Ev'n there thy courage would not lag behind,

In that sharp service, singled from the rest,
The fear of each, or valour, stands confest.
Nor force, nor firmness, the pale coward shews ;
He shifts his place ; his colour comes and goes ; 360

A dropping sweat creeps cold on ev'ry part ;
Against his bosom beats his quiv'ring heart ;
Terror and death in his wild eye-balls stare ;
With chatt'ring teeth he stands, and stiff'ning hair,
And looks a bloodless image of Despair ! 365 }

Not so the brave—still dauntless, still the same,
Unchang'd his colour, and unmov'd his frame ;
Compos'd his thought, determin'd is his eye,
And fix'd his soul, to conquer or to die :
If ought disturb the tenor of his breast, 370
'Tis but the wish to strike before the rest.

In such essays thy blameless worth is known,
And ev'ry art of dang'rous war thy own.
By chance of fight whatever wounds you bore,
'Those wounds were glorious all, and all before ; 375

Such as may teach, 'twas still thy brave delight
 To oppose thy bosom where the foremost fight.
 But why, like infants, cold to honour's charms,
 Stand we to talk, when glory calls to arms?

Go—from my conquer'd spears, the choicest take, 380
 And to their owners send them nobly back.

Swift as the wind bold Merion snatch'd a spear,
 And breathing slaughter follow'd to the war.
 So Mars armipotent invades the plain,
 (The wide destroyer of the race of man,) 385

Terror, his best-lov'd son, attends his course,
 Arm'd with stern boldness, and enormous force;
 The pride of haughty warriors to confound,
 And lay the strength of tyrants on the ground :
 From Thrace they fly, call'd to the dire alarms 390

Of warring Phlegians, and Ephyrian arms;
 Invok'd by both, relentless they dispose
 To these glad conquest, murd'rous rout to those.
 So march the leaders of the Cretan train,
 And their bright arms shot horror o'er the plain. 395

'Then first spake Merion :—shall we join the right,
 Or combat in the centre of the fight?
 Or to the left our wanted succour lend?
 Hazard and fame all parts alike attend.
 Not in the centre, Idomen reply'd, 400

Our ablest chieftains the main battle guide;
 Each godlike Ajax makes that post his care,
 And gallant Teucer deals destruction there :
 Skill'd, or with shafts to gall the distant field,
 Or bear close battle on the sounding shield. 405

These can the rage of haughty Hector tame :
 Safe in their arms, the navy fears no blame ;
 'Till Jove himself descends, his bolts to shed,
 And hurl the brazen ruin at our head.

Great must he be of more than human birth, 410
 Nor feed like mortals on the fruits of earth;
 Him neither rocks can crush, nor steel can wound,
 Whom Ajax fells not on th' ensanguin'd ground.

In standing fight he mates Achilles' force,
 Excell'd alone in swiftness in the course. 415
 'Then to the left our ready arms apply,
 And live with glory, or with glory die.

He said ; and Merion to th' appointed place,
 Fierce as the god of battles, urg'd his pace.
 Soon as the foe the shining chiefs beheld 420
 Rush like a fiery torrent o'er the field,
 Their force embody'd in a tide they pour ;
 The rising combat sounds along the shore.
 As warring winds in Sirius' sultry reign,
 From diff'rent quarters sweep the sandy plain ; 425
 On ev'ry side the dusty whirlwinds rise,
 And the dry fields are lifted to the skies :
 Thus by despair, hope, rage, together driv'n,
 Met the black hosts, a meeting darken'd heav'n.
 All dreadful glar'd the iron face of war, 430
 Bristled with upright spears, that flash'd afar ;
 Dire was the gleam of breast-plates, helms and shields,
 And polish'd arms emblaz'd the flaming fields :
 Tremendous scene ! that gen'ral horror gave,
 But touch'd with joy the bosoms of the brave. 435
 Saturn's great sons in fierce contention vy'd,
 And crowds of heroes in their anger dy'd,
 The sire of earth and heav'n, by Thetis won
 To crown with glory Peleus godlike son,
 Will'd not destruction to the Grecian pow'rs, 440
 But spar'd a while the destin'd Trojan tow'rs :
 While Neptune rising from his azure main,
 Warr'd on the king of heav'n with stern disdain,
 And breath'd revenge, and fir'd the Grecian train : }
 Gods of one source, of one æthereal race, 445
 Alike divine, and heav'n their native place ;
 But Jove the greater ; first-born of the skies,
 And more than men, or gods supremely wise.
 For this, of Jove's superior might afraid,
 Neptune, in human form, conceal'd his aid. 450
 These pow'rs infold the Greek and Trojan train
 In war and discord's adamant chain ;
 Indissolubly strong, the fatal tie
 Is stretch'd on both, and close compell'd they die.
 Dreadful in arms, and grown in combats grey, 455
 The bold Idomeneus controuls the day.
 First by his hand Othryoneus was slain,
 Swell'd with false hopes, with mad ambition vain !

Call'd by the voice of war to martial fame,
 From high Cablesus' distant walls he came ; 460
 Cassandra's love he sought, with boasts of pow'r,
 And promis'd conquest was the proffer'd dow'r.
 'The king consented, by his vaunts abus'd ;
 The king consented, but the fates refus'd ;
 Proud of himself, and of th' imagin'd bride, 465
 'The field he measur'd with a larger stride.
 Him, as he stalk'd, the Cretan jav'lin sound ;
 Vain was his breast-plate to repel the wound :
 His dream of glory lost, he plung'd to hell :
 His arms resounded as the boaster fell. 470

The great Idomeneus bestrides the dead ;
 And thus, he cries, behold thy promise sped !
 Such is the help thy arms to Ilion bring,
 And such the contract of the Phrygian king !
 Our offers now, illustrious prince ! receive ; 475
 For such an aid what will not Argos give ?
 To conquer Troy, with ours thy forces join,
 And count-Atrides' fairest daughter thine.
 Meantime, on farther methods to advise,
 Come, follow to the fleet thy new allies : 480
 There hear what Greece has on her part to say.
 He spoke and dragg'd the goary corse away.

This Asius view'd, unable to contain,
 Before his chariot warring on the plain ;
 (His valu'd coursers, to his squire consign'd, 485
 Impatient panted on his neck behind) ;
 To vengeance rising with a sudden spring,
 He hop'd the conquest of the Cretan king.
 The wary Cretan as his foe drew near,
 Full on his throat discharg'd the forceful spear ; 490
 Beneath the chin the point was seen to glide,
 And glitter'd, extant at the farther side.
 As when the mountain oak, or poplar tall,
 Or pine, fit mast for some great admiral,
 Groans to the oft heav'd ax, with many a wound, 495
 'Then spreads a length of ruin o'er the ground :
 So sunk proud Asius in that dreadful day,
 And stretch'd before his much lov'd coursers lay.
 He grinds the dust distain'd with streaming gore,
 And, fierce in death, lies foaming on the shore. 500

Depriv'd of motion, stiff with stupid fear,
 Stands all aghast his trembling charioteer,
 Nor shuns the foe, nor turns the steeds away,
 But falls transfix'd, an unresisting prey;
 Pierc'd by Antilochus, he pants beneath 505
 The stately car, and labours out his breath.
 Thus Asius' steeds (their mighty master gone)
 Remain the prize of Nestor's youthful son.
 Stab'd at the sight, Deiphobus drew nigh,
 And made, with force, the vengeful weapon fly. 510
 The Cretan saw; and, stooping, caus'd to glance
 From his slop shield, the disappointed lance.
 Beneath the spacious targe, (a blazing round,
 Thick with bull-hides, and brazen orbits bound,
 On his rais'd arm by two strong braces stay'd), 515
 He lay collected in defensive shade.
 O'er his safe head the jav'lin idly sung,
 And on the tinkling verge more faintly rung.
 Ev'n then, the spear the vig'rous arm confest,
 And pierc'd, obliquely, king Hypsenor's breast: 520
 Warm'd in his liver, to the ground it bore
 The chief, his people's guardian now no more!
 Not unattended, the proud Trojan cries,
 Nor unreveng'd lamented Asius lies:
 For thee, tho' hell's black portals stand display'd,
 This mate shall joy thy melancholy shade. 526
 Heart-piercing anguish, at the haughty boast,
 Touch'd ev'ry Greek, but Nestor's son the most.
 Grief'd as he was, his pious arms attend,
 And his broad buckler shields his slaughter'd friend;
 Till sad Mechistheus and Alastor bore 531
 His honour'd body to the tented shore.
 Nor yet from fight Idomeneus withdraws;
 Resolv'd to perish in his country's cause,
 Or find some foe, whom heav'n and he shall doom 535
 To wail his fate in death's eternal gloom.
 He sees Alcatheus in the front aspire:
 Great Æsyetes was the hero's sire;
 His spouse, Hippodame, divinely fair,
 Anchises' eldest hope, and darling care; 540
 Who charm'd her parent's and her husband's heart,
 With beauty, sense, and every work of art:

He once, of Ilion's youth, the loveliest boy,
 The fairest she, of all the fair of Troy.
 By Neptune now the helpless hero dies, 545
 Who covers with a cloud those beauteous eyes,
 And fetters ev'ry limb: yet bent to meet
 His fate he stands; nor shuns the lance of Crete.
 Fixt as some column, or deep-rooted oak,
 (While the winds sleep), his breast receiv'd the stroke.
 Before the pond'rous stroke his cors'let yields, 550
 Long us'd to ward the death in fighting fields.
 The riven armour sends a jarring sound:
 His lab'ring heart heaves with so strong a bound, }
 The long lance shakes, and vibrates in the wound: }
 Fast flowing from its source, as prone he lay, 556
 Life's purple tide impetuous gush'd away.

Then Idomen, insulting o'er the slain:
 Behold, Deiphobus! nor vaunt in vain:
 See! on one Greek three Trojan ghosts attend, 560
 This my third victim, to the shades I send.
 Approaching now, thy boasted might approve,
 And try the prowess of the seed of Jove:
 From Jove, enamour'd on a mortal dame,
 Great Minos, guardian of his country, came: 565
 Deucalion, blameless prince! was Mino's heir:
 His first-born I, the third from Jupiter;
 O'er spacious Crete, and her bold sons I reign,
 And thence my ships transport me thro' the main:
 Lord of a host, o'er all my host I shine, 570
 A scourge to thee, thy father, and thy line.

The Trojan heard; uncertain, or to meet
 Alone, with vent'rous arms, the king of Crete;
 Or seek auxiliar force; at length decreed
 To call some hero to partake the deed. 575
 Forthwith Æneas rises to his thought;
 For him, in Troy's remotest lines, he sought,
 Where he, incens'd at partial Priam stands,
 And sees superior posts in meaner hands.
 To him, ambitious of so great an aid, 580
 The bold Deiphobus approach'd and said:

Now, Trojan prince, employ thy pious arms,
 If e'er thy bosom felt fair honour's charms.

Alcathous dies, thy brother and thy friend !
 Come, and the warrior's lov'd remains defend. 585
 Beneath his cares thy early youth was train'd,
 One table fed you, and one roof contain'd.
 This deed to fierce Idomeneus we owe ;
 Haste, and revenge it on th' insulting foe.
 Æneas heard, and for a space resign'd 590
 'To tender pity all his manly mind ;
 Then rising in his rage he burns to fight ;
 The Greek awaits him, with collected might.
 As the fell boar on some rough mountains head,
 Arm'd with wild terrors, and to slaughter bred, 595
 When the loud rustics rise, and shout from far
 Attends the tumult, and expects the war ;
 O'er his bent back the bristly horrors rise,
 Fires stream in lightning from his sanguine eyes ;
 His foaming tusks both dogs and men engage, 600
 But most his hunters rouse his mighty rage.
 So stood Idomeneus, his jav'lin shook,
 And met the Trojan with a low'ring look,
 Antilochus, Deipyrus were near,
 The youthful offspring of the god of war ; 605
 Merion, and Aphareus, in field renown'd :
 'To these the warrior sent his voice around,
 Fellows in arms! your timely aid unite ;
 Lo, great Æneas rushes to the fight ;
 Sprung from a god, and more than mortal bold ; 610
 He fresh in youth, and I in arms grown old.
 Else should this hand, this hour decide the strife,
 'The great dispute, of glory, or of life
 He spoke, and all as with one soul obey'd
 Their lifted bucklers cast a dreadful shade 615
 Around the chief. Æneas too demands
 Th' assisting forces of his native bands :
 Paris, Deiphobus, Ajenor join ;
 (Co-aids and captains of the Trojan line) ; 620
 In order follow all th' embody'd train ;
 Like Ida's flocks proceeding o'er the plain ;
 Before his fleecy care, erect and bold,
 Stalks the proud ram, the father of the fold :
 With joy the swain surveys them, as he leads 625
 To the cool fountains, thro' the well known meads.

So joys Æneas, as his native band
Moves on in rank, and stretches o'er the land. 626

Round dead Alcathous now the battle rose;
On ev'ry side the steely circle grows:
Now batter'd breast-plates and hack'd helmets ring, 630
And o'er their heads unheaded jav'lins sing.
Above the rest, two tow'ring chiefs appear,
There great Idomeneus, Æneas here.

Like gods of war, dispensing fate, they stood,
And burn'd to drench the ground with mutual blood.
The Trojan weapon whiz'd along in air, 636

The Cretan saw, and shun'd the brazen spear;
Sent from an arm so strong, the missive wood
Stuck deep in earth, and quiver'd where it stood.
But Oenomas receiv'd the Cretan stroke, 640

The forceful spear his hollow corslet broke,
It ripp'd his belly with a ghastly wound,
And roll'd the smoking entrails to the ground.
Stretch'd on the plain, he sobs away his breath,
And furious grasps the bloody dust in death. 645

The victor from his breast the weapon tears;
(His spoils he could not, for the show'r of spears.)

'Tho' now unfit an active war to wage,
Heavy with cumb'rous arms, stiff with cold age,
His listless limbs unable for the course; 650
In standing fight he yet maintains his force;
Till faint with labour, and by foes repell'd,
His tir'd, slow steps, he drags from off the field.

Deiphobus beheld him as he past,
And, fir'd with hate, a parting jav'lin cast: 655

The jav'lin err'd, but held its course along,
And pierc'd Ascalaphus, the brave and young:
The son of Mars fell gasping on the ground,
And gnash'd the dust all bloody with his wound.

Nor knew the furious father of his fall; 660

High thron'd amidst the great Olympian hall,
On golden clouds th' immortal synod sat;
Detain'd from bloody war by Jove and fate;

Now, where in dust the breathless hero lay,
For slain Ascalaphus commenc'd the fray. 665

Deiphobus to seize his helmet flies,
And from his temples rends the glitt'ring prize;

Valiant as Mars, Meriones drew near,
 And on his loaded arm discharg'd his spear :
 He drops the weight, disabled with the pain ; 670
 The hollow helmit rings against the plain,
 Swift as a vulture leaping on his prey,
 From his torn arm the Grecian rent away
 The reeking jav'lin, and rejoin'd his friends.
 His wounded brother good Polites tends ; 675
 Around his waist his pious arms he threw,
 And from the rage of combat gently drew ;
 Him his swift coursers, on his splendid car
 Rapt from the less'ning thunder of the war ;
 To Troy they drove him, groaning from the shore, 680
 And sprinkling, as he past, the sands with gore.

Meanwhile fresh slaughter bathes the sanguine ground,
 Heaps fall on heaps, and heav'n and earth resound.
 Bold Aphareus by great Æneas bled ;
 As tow'rd the chief he turn'd his daring head, 685
 He pierc'd his throat ; the bending head, deprest
 Beneath his helmet, nods upon his breast :
 His shield revers'd o'er the fall'n warrior lies,
 And everlasting slumber seals his eyes.
 Antilochus, as Thoon turn'd him round, 690
 Transpierc'd his back with a dishonest wound :
 The hollow vein that to the neck extends,
 Along the chine, his eager jav'lin rends :
 Supine he falls, and to his social train
 Spreads his imploring arms, but spreads in vain, 695
 Th' exulting victor leaping where he lay,
 From his broad shoulders tore the spoils away,
 His time observ'd ; for clos'd by foes around,
 On all sides thick, the peals of arms resound.
 His shield, emboss'd, the ringing storm sustains, 700
 But he impervious and untouch'd remains.
 (Great Neptune's care preserv'd from hostile rage
 This youth, the joy of Nestor's glorious age.)
 In arms intrepid, with the first he fought,
 Fac'd ev'ry foe, and every danger sought ; 705
 His winged lance, resistless as the wind,
 Obeys each motion of the master's mind,

Restless it flies, impatient to be free,
And meditates the distant enemy.
The son of Asius, Adamas drew near, 710
And struck his target with the brazen spear,
Fierce on his front; but Neptune wards the blow,
And blunts the jav'lin of th' eluded foe.
In the broad buckler half the weapon stood;
Splinter'd on earth flew half the broken wood. 715
Disarm'd, he mingled in the Trojan crew;
But Merion's spear o'ertook him as he flew,
Deep in the belly's rim an entrance found,
Where sharp the pang, and mortal is the wound, }
Bending he fell, and, doubled to the ground, 720 }
Lay panting. Thus an ox, in fetters ty'd,
While death's strong pangs distend his lab'ring side,
His bulk enormous on the field displays;
His heaving heart beats thick, as ebbing life decays.
The spear, the conqu'ror from his body drew, 725
And death's dim shadows swam before his view.
Next brave Deipyrus in dust was laid:
King Helenus wav'd high the Thracian blade,
And smote his temples with an arm so strong,
The helm fell off, and roll'd amid the throng: 730
There, for some luckier Greek it rests a prize,
For dark in death the godlike owner lies!
With raging grief great Menelaus burns,
And fraught with vengeance, to the victor turns;
That shook the pond'rous lance, in act to throw, 735
And this stood adverse with the bended bow:
Full on his breast the Trojan arrow fell,
But harmless bounded from the plated steel.
As on some ample barn's well harden'd floor.
(The winds collected at each open door,) 740
While the broad fan with force is whirl'd around,
Light leaps the golden grain, resulting from the ground:
So from the steel that guards Atrides' heart,
Repell'd to distance flies the bounding dart.
Atrides, watchful of th' unwary foe, 745
Pierc'd with his lance the hand that grasp'd the bow,
And nail'd it to the yew: the wounded hand
Trail'd the long lance that mark'd with blood the sand:

But good Agenor gently from the wound
The spear solicits, and the bandage bound ; 750
A sling's soft wool, snatch'd from a soldier's side,
At once the tent and ligature supply'd.

Behold ! Pisander, urg'd by fate's decree,
Springs thro' the ranks to fall, and fall by thee,
Great Menelaus ! to enhance thy fame : 755

High-tow'ring in the front, the warrior came,
First the sharp lance was by Atrides thrown,
The lance far distant by the winds was blown.
Nor pierc'd Pisander thro' Atrides' shield,
Pisander's spear fell shiver'd on the field. 760

Not so discourag'd, to the future blind,
Vain dreams of conquest swell his haughty mind ;
Dauntless he rushes where the Spartan lord
Like lightning brandish'd his far beaming sword.
His left arm high oppos'd the shining shield : 765

His right, beneath, the cover'd pole-ax held ;
An olive's cloudy grain the handle made,
Distinct with studs ; and brazen was the blade ;
This on the helm discharg'd a noble blow,
The plume dropp'd nodding to the plain below, 770
Shorn from the crest. Atrides way'd his steel,
Deep thro' his front the weighty faulchion fell.

The crashing bones before its force gave way,
In dust and blood the groaning hero lay ;
Forc'd from their ghastly orbs, and spouting gore, 775
The clotted eye-balls tumble on the shore.

The fierce Atrides spurn'd him as he bled,
'Tore off his arms, and, loud-exulting, said.

'Thus, Trojans, thus, at length be taught to fear ;
O race perfidious, who delight in war : 780

Already noble deeds ye have perform'd,
A princess rap'd transcends a navy storm'd :
In such bold feats your impious might approve,
Without th' assistance, or the fear of Jove ;
The violated rites, the ravish'd dame, 785

Our heroes slaughter'd, and our ships on flame ;
Crimes heap'd on crimes, shall bend your glory down,
And whelm in ruins yon flagitious town.

O thou great father ! Lord of earth and skies,
Above the thought of man supremely wise ! 790

If from thy hand the fates of mortals flow,
From whence this favour to an impious foe?
A godless crew, abandon'd and unjust,
Still breathing rapine, violence, and lust!
The best of things, beyond their measure cloy; 795
Sleep's balmy blessing, Jove's endearing joy;
The feast, the dance; whate'er mankind desire,
Ev'n the sweat charms of sacred numbers tire.
But Troy for ever reaps a dire delight
In thirst of slaughter, and in lust of fight. 800

This said, he seiz'd (while yet the carcase heav'd)
The bloody armour, which his train receiv'd:
Then sudden mix'd among the warring crew,
And the bold son of Pylæmenes slew. 805
Harpalian had thro' Asia travell'd far,
Following his martial father to the war;
Thro' filial love he left his native shore,
Never, ah, never, to behold it more!
His unsuccessful spear he chanc'd to fling
Against the target of the Spartan king; 810
Thus of his lance disarm'd, from death he flies,
And turns around his apprehensive eyes,
Him thro' the hip transpiercing as he fled,
'The shaft of Merion mingled with the dead.
Beneath the bone the glancing point descends, 815
And driving down, the swelling bladder rends;
Sunk in his sad companion's arms he lay,
And in short pantings sob'd his soul away;
(Like some vile worm extended on the ground,)
While life's red torrent gush'd from out the wound.

Him on his car the Paphlagonian train 821
In slow procession bore from off the plain.
'The pensive father, father now no more!
Attends the mournful pomp along the shore,
And unavailing tears profusely shed, 825
And, unreveng'd, deplor'd his offspring dead.

Paris from far the moving sight beheld,
With pity soften'd, and with fury swell'd:
His honour'd host, a youth of matchless grace,
And lov'd of all the Paphlagonian race! 830
With his full strength he bent his angry bow,
And wing'd the feather'd vengeance at the foe.

A chief there was, the brave Euchenor nam'd,
 For riches much, and more for virtue fam'd,
 Who held his seat in Corinth's stately town, 835
 Polydus' son, a seer of old renown,
 Oft had the father told his early doom,
 By arms abroad, or slow disease at home.
 He climb'd his vessel, prodigal of breath,
 And chose the certain glorious path to death. 840
 Beneath his ear the pointed arrow went,
 The soul came issuing at the narrow vent :
 His limbs, unnerv'd, dropp'd useless on the ground,
 And everlasting darkness shades him round.
 Nor knew great Hector how his legions yield, 845
 (Wrapt in the cloud and tumult of the field,)
 Wide on the left the force of Greece commands,
 And conquest hovers o'er th' Achaian bands ;
 With such a tide superior virtue sway'd,
 And he * that shakes the solid earth, gave aid. 850
 But in the centre Hector fix'd remain'd,
 Where first the gates were forc'd, and bulwarks gain'd ;
 There, on the margin of the hoary deep,
 (Their naval station where th' Ajaxes keep,
 And where low walls confine the beating tides, 855
 Whose humble barrier scarce the foes divides ;
 Where late in fight both foot and horse engag'd,
 And all the thunder of the battle rag'd :)
 There join'd, the whole Boeotian strength remains,
 The proud Ionians with their sweeping trains, 860
 Locrians and Phthians, and th' Epæan force,
 But join'd repell'd not Hector's fiery course.
 The flow'r of Athens, Stichius, Phidus led,
 Bias, and great Menestheus at their head.
 Meges the strong th' Epeian bands controul'd, 865
 And Dracius prudent, and Amphion bold ;
 The Phthians Medon, fam'd for martial might,
 And brave Podarces, active in the fight.
 This drew from Phylacus his noble line ;
 Iphiclus' son : and that, Oileus, thine : 870
 (Young Ajax brother, by a stol'n embrace ;
 He dwelt far distant from his native place,
 By his fierce stepdame from his father's reign
 Expell'd and exil'd for her brother slain.)

* Neptune.

These rule the Phthians, and their arms employ 875

Mixt with Bœotians, on the shores of Troy.

Now side by side, with like unweary'd care,

Each Ajax labour'd thro' the field of war.

So when two lordly bulls, with equal toil,

Force the bright plowshare thro' the fallow soil, 880

Join'd to one yoke, the stubborn earth they tear,

And trace large furrows with the shining share ;

O'er their huge limbs the foam descends in snow,

And streams of sweat down their sour foreheads flow.

A train of heroes follow'd thro' the field, 885

Who wore by turns great Ajax' sev'nfold shield ;

Whene'er he breath'd, remissive of his might,

Tir'd with the incessant slaughters of the fight :

No following troops his brave associate grace,

In close engagement an unpractic'd race, 890.

The Locrian squadrons nor the jav'lin wield,

Nor bear the helm, nor lift the moony shield ;

But skill'd from far the flying shaft to wing,

Or whirl the sounding pebble from the sling,

Dext'rous with these they aim a certain wound, 895

Or fell the distant warrior to the ground.

Thus in the van the Telamonian train

Throng'd in bright arms, a pressing fight maintain :

Far in the rear the Locrian archers lie,

Whose stones and arrows intercept the sky, 900

The mingled tempest on the foes they pour,

Troy's scatt'ring orders open to the show'r.

Now had the Greeks eternal fame acquit'd,

And the gall'd Ilians to their walls retir'd ;

But sage Polydamus, discreetly brave, 905

Address'd great Hector, and this counsel gave.

Tho' great in all, thou seem'st averse to lend

Impartial audience to a faithful friend :

To gods and men thy matchless worth is known,

And ev'ry art of glorious war thy own ; 910

But in cool thought and counsel to excel,

How widely differs this from warring well !

Content with what the bounteous gods have giv'n,

Seek not alone t' ingross the gifts of heav'n.

To some the pow'rs of bloody war belong, 915

To some sweet music, and the charm of song ;

To few, and wond'rous few, has Jove assign'd
 A wise, extensive, all-consid'ring mind :
 Their guardian these, the nations round confess,
 And towns and empires for their safety bless. 920
 If heav'n have lodg'd this virtue in my breast,
 Attend, O Hector, what I judge the best.
 See, as thou mov'st on dangers, dangers spread,
 And wars whole fury burns around thy head.
 Behold ! distress'd within yon hostile wall, 925
 How many Trojans yield, disperse, or fall !
 What troops, out-number'd, scarce the war maintain !
 And what brave heroes at the ships lie slain !
 Here cease thy fury ; and the chiefs and kings,
 Convok'd to council, weigh the sum of things. 930
 Whether (the gods succeeding our desires)
 To yon tall ships to bear the Trojan fires ;
 Or quit the fleet, and pass unhurt away,
 Contented with the conquest of the day :
 I fear, I fear, lest Greece, not yet undone, 935
 Pay the large debt of last revolving sun ;
 Achilles, great Achilles, yet remains
 On yonder decks, and yet o'erlooks the plains !
 The counsel pleas'd ; and Hector with a bound,
 Leap'd from his chariot on the trembling ground ;
 Swift as he leap'd, his clanging arms resound. 941 }
 To guard this post, he cry'd, thy art employ,
 And here detain the scatter'd youth of Troy ;
 Where yonder heroes faint, I bend my way,
 And hasten back to end the doubtful day. 945
 This said, the tow'ring chief prepares to go,
 Shakes his white plumes that to the breezes flow,
 And seems a moving mountain topt with snow :
 Thro' all his host, inspiring force, he flies,
 And bids anew the martial thunder rise. 950
 To Panthus' son, at Hector's high command.
 Haste the bold leaders of the Trojan band :
 But round the battlements, and round the plain,
 For many a chief he look'd, but look'd in vain ;
 Deiphobus, nor Helenus the seer, 955
 Nor Asius' son, nor Asius' self appear,
 For these were pierc'd with many a ghastly wound,
 Some cold in death, some groaning on the ground ;

Some low in dust a mournful object lay ;
High on the wall some breath'd their soul away. 960

Far on the left, amid the throng, he found
(Cheering the troops, and dealing deaths around)
The graceful Paris ; whom, with fury mov'd,
Opprobrious, thus, th' impatient chief reprov'd.
Ill-fated Paris ! slave to womankind, 965

As smooth of face as fraudulent of mind !
Where is Deiphobus, where Asius gone ?
The godlike father, and th' intrepid son ?
The force of Helenus, dispensing fate,
And great Orthryoneus so fear'd of late ? 970
Black fate hangs o'er thee from the avenging gods,
Imperial Troy from her foundations nods ;
Whelm'd in thy country's ruins shalt thou fall,
And one devouring vengeance swallow all.

When Paris thus : my brother and my friend, 975
Thy warm impatience makes thy tongue offend.

In other battles I deserv'd thy blame,
Tho' then not deedless, nor unknown to fame :
But since yon rampart by thy arms lay low,
I scatter'd slaughter from my fatal bow. 980

The chiefs you seek on yonder shore lie slain ;
Of all those heroes, two alone remain ;
Deiphobus, and Helenus the seer :
Each now disabled by a hostile spear.

Go then, successful, where thy soul inspires : 985
This heart and hand shall second all thy fires :
What with this arm I can prepare to know,
Till death for death be paid, and blow for blow.

But 'tis not ours, with forces not our own
To combat ; strength is of the gods alone. 990

These words the hero's angry mind assuage :
Then fierce they mingle where the thickest rage.
Around Polydamas, distain'd with blood,
Cebrión, Phalces, stern Orthæus stood,

Palmus, with Polypætus the divine, 995
And two bold brothers of Hippotion's line :

(Who reach'd fair Ilion, from Ascania far,
The former day ; the next engag'd in war.)
As when from gloomy clouds a whirlwind springs,
That bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful wings ; 1000

Wide o'er the blasted fields the tempest sweeps,
 Then gather'd, settles on the hoary deeps;
 The afflicted deeps tumultuous mix and roar;
 The waves behind impel the waves before,
 Wide rolling, foaming high, and tumbling to the
 shore. 1005

Thus rank on rank the thick battalions throng,
 Chief urg'd on chief, and man drove man along,
 Far o'er the plains in dreadful order bright,
 The brazen arms reflect a beamy light:
 Full in the blazing van great Hector shin'd, 1010
 Like Mars commission'd to confound mankind.
 Before him flaming, his enormous shield,
 Like the broad sun, illumin'd all the field:
 His nodding helm emits a streamy ray;
 His piercing eyes thro' all the battle stray, 1015
 And, while beneath his targe he flash'd along,
 Shot terrors round, that wither'd ev'n the strong.

Thus stalk'd he, dreadful: death was in his look;
 Whole nations fear'd; but not an Argive shook.
 The tow'ring Ajax, with an ample stride, 1020
 Advanc'd the first, and thus the chief defy'd.

Hector! come on, thy empty threats forbear:
 'Tis not thy arm, 'tis thund'ring Jove we fear:
 The skill of war to us not idly giv'n, 1024
 Lo! Greece is humbled, not by Troy, but heav'n.
 Vain are the hopes that haughty mind imparts
 To force our fleet; the Greeks have hands, and hearts.
 Long e'er in flames our lofty navy fall,
 Your boasted city, and your god-built wall,
 Shall sink beneath us, smoking on the ground; 1030
 And spread along, unmeasur'd ruin round.
 The time shall come, when chas'd along the plain,
 Ev'n thou shalt call on Jove, and call in vain:
 Ev'n thou shalt wish, to aid thy desp'rate course,
 The wings of falcons for thy flying horse; 1035
 Shalt run, forgetful of a warrior's fame,
 While clouds of friendly dust conceal thy shame.

As thus he spoke, behold in open view,
 On sounding wings a dexter eagle flew.
 To Jove's glad omen all the Grecians rise, 1040
 And hail, with shouts, his progress thro' the skies:

Far-echoing clamours bound from side to side ;
They ceas'd ; and thus the chief of Troy reply'd.

From whence this menace, this insulting strain ?
Enormous boaster ! doom'd to vaunt in vain, 1045
So may the gods on Hector life bestow,
(Not that short life which mortals lead below,
But such as those of Jove's high lineage born,
The blue-ey'd maid, or he that gilds the morn,)
As this decisive day shall end the fame 1050
Of Greece, and Argos be no more a name.
And thou, imperious, if thy madness wait
The lance of Hector, thou shalt meet thy fate ;
That giant-corse, extended on the shore,
Shall largely feast the fowls with fat and gore. 1055
He said, and like a lion stalk'd along :
With shouts incessant earth and ocean rung,
Sent from his foll'wing host : the Grecian train
With answer'ing thunders fill'd the echoing plain ;
A shout that tore heav'ns concave, and above 1060
Shook the fix'd splendors of the throne of Jove.

THE
I L I A D.
BOOK XIV.

The Argument

Juno deceives Jupiter by the girdle of Venus.

NESTOR, sitting at the table with Machaon, is alarmed with the increasing clamour of the war, and hastens to Agamemnon: on his way, he meets that prince with Diomed and Ulysses, whom he informs of the extremity of the danger. Agamemnon proposes to make their escape by night, which Ulysses withstands; to which Diomed adds his advice, that, wounded as they were, they should go forth and encourage the army with their presence; which advice is pursued. Juno, seeing the partiality of Jupiter to the Trojans, forms a design to over-reach him; she sets off her charms with the utmost care, and (the more surely to enchant him) obtains the magic girdle of Venus. She then applies herself to the god of sleep, and, with some difficulty, persuades him to seal the eyes of Jupiter; this done she goes to mount Ida, where the god, at first sight, is ravished with her beauty, sinks in her embraces, and is laid asleep. Neptune takes advantage of his slumber, and succours the Greeks: Hector is struck to the ground with a prodigious stone by Ajax, and carried off from the battle: several actions succeed; till the Trojans, much distressed, are obliged to give way: the lesser Ajax signalizes himself in a particular manner.

BUT not the genial feast, nor flowing bowl,
Could charm the cares of Nestor's watchful soul;
His startled ears th' increasing cries attend,
Then thus, impatient, to his wounded friend.

What new alarm, divine Machaon, say,
 What mixt events attend this mighty day ?
 Hark ! how the shouts divide, and how they meet,
 And now come full, and thicken to the fleet !
 Here, with the cordial draught dispel thy care,
 Let Hecamede the strength'ning bath prepare, 10
 Refresh thy wound, and cleanse the clotted gore ;
 While I th' adventures of the day explore.

He said : and seizing Thrasemedes' shield,
 (His valiant offspring,) hasten'd to the field ;
 (That day, the son his father's buckler bore ;) 15
 Then snatch'd a lance, and issued from the door.
 Soon as the prospect open'd to his view,
 His wounded eyes the scene of sorrow knew ;
 Dire disarray ! the tumult of the fight,
 The wall in ruins, and the Greeks in flight. 20
 As when old Ocean's silent surface sleeps,
 The waves just heaving on the purple deeps ;
 While yet th' expected tempest hangs on high,
 Weighs down the cloud, and blackens in the sky,
 The mass of waters will no wind obey ; 25
 Jove sends one gust, and bids them roll away.
 While wav'ring counsels thus his mind engage,
 Fluctuates in doubtful thought the Pylian sage,
 To join the host, or to the gen'ral haste ;
 Debating long, he fixes on the last : 30
 Yet, as he moves, the fight his bosom warms ;
 The field rings dreadful with the clang of arms ;
 The gleaming faulchions flash, the jav'lins fly :
 Blows echo blows, and all or kill, or die.

Him, in his march the wounded princes meet, 35
 By tardy steps ascending from the fleet :
 The king of men, Ulysses the divine,
 And who to Tydeus owes his noble line.
 (Their ships at distance from the battle stand,
 In lines advanc'd along the shelving strand ; 40
 Whose bay, the fleet unable to contain
 At length ; beside the margin of the main,
 Rank above rank, the crowded ships they moor :
 Who landed first, lay highest on the shore.)
 Supported on their spears, they took their way, 45
 'Juit to fight, but anxious for the day.

Nestor's approach alarm'd each Grecian breast,
Whom thus the gen'ral of the host address.

O grace and glory of th' Achaian name!
What drives thee, Nestor, from the field of fame? 50
Shall then proud Hector see his boast fulfill'd,
Our fleets in ashes, and our heroes kill'd?
Such was his threat, ah! now too soon made good,
On many a Grecian bosom writ in blood.
Is ev'ry heart inflam'd with equal rage 55
Against your king, nor will one chief engage?
And have I liv'd to see with mournful eyes
In ev'ry Greek a new Achilles rise?

Gereñian Nestor then. So fate has will'd;
And all confirming time has fate fulfill'd. 60
Not he that thunders from the aerial bow'r,
Not Jove himself, upon the past has pow'r.
The wall, our late inviolable bound,
And best defence, lies smoaking on the ground:
Ev'n to the ships their conqu'ring arms extend, 65
And groans of slaughter'd Greeks to heav'n ascend.
On speedy measures then employ your thought;
In such distress, if counsel profit ought;
Arms cannot much: though Mars our souls incite;
These gasping wounds with-hold us from the fight. 70

To him the monarch. That our army bends,
That Troy triumphant our high fleet ascends,
And that the rampart, late our surest twist,
And best defence, lies smoaking in the dust:
All this from Jove's afflictive hand we bear, 75
Who, far from Argos, wills our ruin here.
Past are the days when happier Greece was blest,
And all his favour, all his aid confest;
Now heav'n averse, our hands from battle ties,
And lifts the Trojan glory to the skies. 80

Cease we at length to waste our blood in vain,
And launch what ships lie nearest to the main;
Leave these at anchor till the coming night:
Then, if impetuous Troy forbear the fight, 85 }
Bring all to sea, and hoist each sail for flight. }
Better from evils, well foreseen, to run,
Than perish in the danger we may shun.

Thus he. The sage Ulysses thus replies ;
While anger flash'd from his disdainful eyes.
What shameful words, unkingly as thou art, 90
Fall from that trembling tongue, and tim'rous heart ?
Oh were thy sway the curse of meaner pow'rs,
And thou the shame of any host but ours !
A host, by Jove endu'd with martial might,
And taught to conquer, or to fall in fight : 95
Advent'rous combats and bold wars to wage,
Employ'd our youth, and yet employs our age.
And wilt thou thus desert the Trojan plain ?
And have whole streams of blood been spilt in vain ?
In such base sentence if thou couch thy fear, 100
Speak it in whispers, lest a Greek should hear.
Lives there a man so dead to fame, who dares
To think such meanness, or the thought declares ?
And comes it ev'n from him whose sov'reign sway
The banded legions of all Greece obey ? 105
Is this a gen'ral's voice, that calls to flight,
While war hangs doubtful, while his soldiers fight ?
What more could Troy : what yet their fate denies,
Thou giv'st the foe : all Greece becomes their prize.
No more the troops (our hoisted sails in view, 110
'Themselves abandon'd) shall the fight pursue ;
Thy ships first flying with despair shall see,
And owe destruction to a prince like thee.
Thy just reproofs, Atrides calm replies,
Like arrows pierce me, for thy words are wise. 115
Unwilling as I am to lose the host,
I force not Greece to quit this hateful coast.
Glad, I submit, who'er, or young or old,
Ought, more conducive to our weal, unfold.
Tydides cut him short, and thus began. 120
Such counsel if you seek, behold the man
Who boldly gives it, and what he shall say,
Young tho' he be, disdain not to obey ;
A youth, who from the mighty Tydeus springs,
May speak to councils and assembled kings. 125
Hear then in me the great Oenides' son,
Whose honour'd dust, his race of glory run,
Lies whelm'd in ruins of the Theban wall ;
Brave in his life, and glorious in his fall.

With three bold sons was gen'rous Prothous blest, 130
 Who Pleurion's walls and Calydon possess;
 Melas and Agrius, but (who far surpass
 The rest in courage) Oeneus was the last.
 From him, my sire. From Calydon expell'd,
 He past to Argos, and in exile dwell'd; 135
 The monarch's daughter there (so Jove ordain'd)
 He won, and flourish'd where Adrastus reign'd;
 There rich in fortune's gift, his acres till'd,
 Beheld his vines their liquid harvest yield, }
 And num'rous flocks that whiten'd all the field. 140 }
 Such Tydeus was, the foremost once in fame!
 Nor lives in Greece a stranger to his name.
 Then, what for common good my thoughts inspire,
 Attend, and in the son respect the sire.
 Tho' sore of battle, tho' with wounds oppress,
 Let each go forth, and animate the rest; 146
 Advance the glory which we cannot share,
 Tho' not partaker, witness of the war.
 But lest new wounds on wounds o'erpow'r us quite,
 Beyond the missile jav'lin's sounding flight, 150
 Safe let us stand; and from the tumult far,
 Inspire the ranks, and rule the distant war.
 He added not: the listening kings obey,
 Slow moving on; Atrides leads the way.
 The god of ocean, to inflame their rage, 155
 Appears a warrior furrow'd o'er with age;
 Prest in his own, the gen'ral's hand he took,
 And thus the venerable hero spoke.
 Atrides, lo! with what disdainful eye
 Achilles sees his country's forces fly; 160
 Blind impious man! whose anger is his guide,
 Who glories in unutterable pride.
 So may he perish, so may Jove disclaim
 The wretch relentless, and o'erwhelm with shame!
 But heav'n forsakes not thee: o'er yonder sands 165
 Soon shalt thou view the scatter'd Trojan bands
 Fly diverse; while proud kings, and chiefs renown'd,
 Driv'n heaps on heaps, with clouds involv'd around
 Of rolling dust, their winged wheels employ
 To hide their ignominious heads in Troy. 170

He spoke, then rush'd amid the warrior crew ;
And sent his voice before him as he flew ;
Loud, as the shout encount'ring armies yield,
When twice ten thousand shake the lab'ring field ;
Such was the voice, and such the thund'ring sound
Of him, whose trident rends the solid ground. 176
Each Argive bosom beats to meet the fight.
And grisly wars appear a pleasing sight.

Meantime Saturnia from Olympus' brow,
High thron'd in gold, beheld the fields below ; 180
With joy the glorious conflict she survey'd,
Where her great brother gave the Grecians aid,
But plac'd aloft, on Ida's shady height
She sees her Jove, and trembles at the sight.
Jove to deceive, what methods shall she try, 185
What arts, to blind his all beholding eye ?
At length she trusts her pow'r ; resolv'd to prove
'The old, yet still successful, cheat of love ;
Against his wisdom to oppose her charms,
And lull the lord of thunders in her arms. 190
Swift to her bright apartment she repairs,
Sacred to dress, and beauties pleasing cares :
With skill divine had Vulcan form'd the bow'r,
Safe from access of each intruding pow'r.
'Touch'd with her secret key, the doors unfold ; 195
Self-close behind her shut the valves of gold.
Here first she bathes ; and round her body pours
Soft oils of fragrance and ambrosial show'rs :
The winds perfum'd, the balmy gale convey
'Thro' heav'n, thro' earth, and all the aerial way :
Spirit divine ! whose exhalation greets 201
'The sense of gods with more than mortal sweets.
'Thus while she breath'd of heav'n, with decent pride
Her artful hands the radiant tresses ty'd ;
Part on her head in shining ringlets roll'd 205
Part o'er her shoulders wav'd like melting gold.
Around her next a heav'nly mantle flow'd,
'That rich with Pallas' labour'd colours glow'd :
Large clasps of gold the foldings gather'd round,
A golden zone her swelling bosom bound ; 210
Far beaming pendants tremble in her ear,
Each gem illumin'd with a triple star.

Then o'er her head she casts a veil, more white
Then new fall'n snow, and dazzling as the light.
Last her fair feet celestial sandals grace. 215

Thus issuing radiant, with majestic pace,
Forth from the doom th' imperial goddess moves,
And calls the mother of the smiles and loves.

How long (to Venus thus apart she cry'd)
Shall human strifes celestial minds divide? 220

Ah yet! will Venus aid Saturnia's joy,
And set aside the cause of Greece and Troy?

Let heavens dread empress, Cytheræa said,
Speak her request, and deem her will obey'd 224
Then grant me, said the queen, those conqu'ring charms,
That pow'r which mortals and immortals warms,
That love, which melts mankind in fierce desires,
And burns the sons of heav'n with sacred fires!

For lo! I haste to those remote abodes,
Where the great parents, sacred source of gods! 230
Ocean and Tethys their old empire keep,
On the last limits of the land and deep.

In their kind arms my tender years were past;
What time old Saturn, from Olympus cast,
Of upper heav'n to Jove resign'd the reign, 235
Whelm'd under the huge mass of earth and main.

For strife, I hear has made the union cease,
Which held so long that ancient pair in peace,
What honour, and what love shall I obtain,
If I compose those fatal feuds again! 240

Once more their minds in mutual ties engage,
And what my youth has ow'd, repay their age.

She said. With awe divine the queen of love
Obey'd the sister and the wife of Jove:

And from her fragrant breast the zone unbrac'd, 245
With various skill, and high embroid'ry grac'd.

In this was ev'ry art, and ev'ry charm,
To win the wisest, and the coldest warm:
Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,
The kind deceit, the still-reviving fire, 250

Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,
Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes.

This on her hand the Cyprian goddess laid;
Take this, and with it all thy wish, she said:

With smiles she took the charm ; and smiling prest
 The pow'rful cestus to her snowy breast. 256
 Then Venus to the courts of Jove withdrew ;
 Whilst from Olympus pleas'd Saturnia flew,
 O'er high Pieria thence her course she bore,
 O'er fair Emathia's ever-pleasing shore, 260
 O'er Hæmus' hills, with snows eternal crown'd ;
 Nor once her flying foot approach'd the ground.
 Then taking wing from Atho's lofty steep,
 She speeds to Lemnos o'er the rolling deep,
 And seeks the cave of Death's half-brother, Sleep. }
 Sweet pleasing Sleep ! (Saturnia thus began), 266
 Who spread'st thy empire o'er each god and man ;
 If e'er obsequious to thy Juno's will,
 O pow'r of slumbers ; hear and favour still.
 Shed thy soft dews on Jove's immortal eyes, 270
 While sunk in love's entrancing joys he lies.
 A splendid footstool, and a throne, that shine
 With gold unfading, Somnus, shall be thine ;
 The work of Vulcan ; to indulge thy ease,
 When wine and feasts thy golden humours please. 275
 Imperial dame, (the balmy pow'r replies),
 Great Saturn's heir, and empress of the skies !
 O'er other gods I spread my easy chain ;
 The sire of all, old Ocean, owns my reign,
 And his hush'd waves lie silent on the main. 280 }
 But how, unbidden, shall I dare to steep,
 Jove's awful temples in the dew of sleep ?
 Long since too vent'rous, at thy bold command,
 On these eternal lids I laid my hand :
 What time, deserting Ilion's wasted plain, 285
 His conqu'ring Son, Alcides, plow'd the main :
 When lo ! the deeps arise, the tempests roar,
 And drive the hero to the Coan shore :
 Great Jove awaking, shook the blest abodes
 With rising wrath, and tumbled gods on gods ; 290
 Me chief he sought, and from the realms on high
 Had hurl'd indignant to the nether sky,
 But gentle Night, to whom I fled for aid,
 (The friend of earth and heav'n), her wings display'd ;
 Impow'r'd the wrath of gods and men to tame, 295
 Ev'n Jove rever'd the venerable dame.

Vain are thy fears, (the queen of heav'n replies,
And speaking, rolls her large majestic eyes)
Think'st thou that Troy has Jove's high favour won,
Like great Alcides, his all-conqu'ring son? 300
Hear, and obey the mistress of the skies,
Nor for the deed expect a vulgar prize;
For know, thy lov'd one shall be ever thine,
The youngest Grace, Pasithea the divine.

Swear then, he said, by those tremendous floods 305
That roar thro' hell, and bind th' invoking gods :
Let the great parent Earth one hand sustain,
And stretch the other o'er the sacred main.
Call the black Titans that with Chronus dwell,
To hear and witness from the depths of hell ; 310
That she, my lov'd one, shall be ever mine,
The youngest Grace, Pasithea the divine.

The queen assents, and from th' infernal bow'rs,
Invokes the sable subtartarean pow'rs,
And those who rule th' inviolable floods, 315
Whom mortals name the dread Titanian gods.

'Then swift as wind, o'er Lemnos' smoky isle,
They wing their way, and Imbrus'd sea-beat soil
Thro' air unscen involv'd in darkness glide,
And light on Lectos, on the point of Ide, 320
(Mother of savages, whose echoing hills
Are heard resounding with a hundred rills),
Fair Ida trembles underneath the god ;
Hush'd are her mountains, and her forests nod.
'There on a fir, whose spiry branches rise 325
To join its summit to the neighb'ring skies,
Dark in embow'ring shade, conceal'd from sight,
Sat Sleep, in likeness of the bird of night.
(Chalcis his name, by those of heav'nly birth,
But call'd Cymindis by the race of earth). 330

'To Ida's top successful Juno flies ;
Great Jove surveys her with desiring eyes :
'The god, whose lightening sets the heav'ns on fire,
'Thro' all his bosom feels the fierce desire ;
Fierce as when first by stealth he seiz'd her charms,
Mix'd with her soul, and melted in her arms. 336
Fix'd on her eyes he fed his eager look,
Then press'd her hand, and thus with transport spoke.

Why comes my goddess from th' æth'erial sky,
And not her steeds and flaming chariot nigh! 310

Then she—I haste to those remote abodes,
Where the great parents of the deathless gods,
The rev'rend Ocean and grey Tethys reign,
On the last limits of the land and main.
I visit these, to whose indulgent cares 315
I owe the nursing of my tender years.

For strife, I hear, has made that union cease,
Which held so long this ancient pair in peace.
The steeds prepar'd my chariot to convey
O'er earth and seas, and thro' th' ærial way, 350
Wait under Ide: of thy superior pow'r
To ask consent, I leave th' Olympian bow'r;
Nor seek, unknown to thee, the sacred cells
Deep under seas, where hoary Ocean dwells.

For that, said Jove, suffice another day;
But eager love denies the least delay. 355

Let softer cares the present hour employ,
And be these moments sacred all to joy.
Ne'er did my soul so strong a passion prove,
Or for an earthly or a heav'nly love: 60

Not when I press'd Ixion's matchless dame,
Whence rose Perithous like the gods in fame.
Not when fair Danaë felt the show'r of gold
Stream into life, whence Perseus brave and bold.
Not thus I burn'd for either Theban dame, 365
(Bacchus from this, from that Alcides came).

Not Phœnix' daughter, beautiful and young,
Whence godlike Rhadamanth and Minos sprung.
Not thus I burn'd for fair Latona's face,
Nor comelier Ceres more majestic grace. 370

Not thus ev'n for thyself I felt desire,
As now my veins receive the pleasing fire.

He spoke; the goddess with the charming eyes
Glows with celestial red, and thus replies.
Is this a scene for love? on Ida's height 375

Expos'd to mortal, and immortal sight;
Our joys profan'd by each familiar eye;
The sport of heav'n, and fable of the sky.
How shall I e'er review the blest abodes
Or mix among the senate of the gods? 380

Shall I not think, that, with disorder'd charms,
 All heav'n behold's me recent from thy arms ?
 With skill divine has Vulcan form'd thy bow'r,
 Sacred to love, and to the genial hour ;
 If such thy will, to that recess retire, 385
 And secret there indulge thy soft desire.

She ceas'd ; and smiling with superior love,
 Thus answer'd mild the cloud compelling Jove.
 Nor god, nor mortal shall our joys behold,
 Shaded with clouds, and circumfus'd in gold, 390
 Not ev'n the sun, who darts thro' heav'n his rays,
 And whose broad eye th' extended earth surveys.
 Gazing he spoke, and kindling at the view,
 His eager arms around the goddess threw.
 Glad earth receives, and from her bosom pours 395
 Unbidden herbs and voluntary flow'rs :
 Thick new-born vi'lets a soft carpet spread,
 And clust'ring lotos swell'd the rising bed,
 And sudden hyacinths the turf bestrow,
 And flamy crocus made the mountain glow. 400
 There golden clouds conceal the heav'nly pair,
 Steep'd in soft joys, and circumfus'd with air ;
 Celestial dews, descending o'er the ground,
 Perfume the mount, and breathe ambrosia round.
 At length with love and sleep's soft pow'r oppress'd, 405
 The panting thund'rer nods, and sinks to rest.

Now to the navy borne on silent wings,
 To Neptune's ear soft Sleep his message brings ;
 Beside him sudden unperceiv'd he stood,
 And thus with gentle words address'd the god. 410

Now, Neptune ! now, th' important hour employ,
 To check a while the haughty hopes of Troy :
 While Jove yet rests, while yet my vapours shed
 The golden vision round his sacred head ;
 For Juno's love, and Somnus' pleasing ties, 415
 Have clos'd those awful and eternal eyes.
 Thus having said, the pow'r of slumber flew,
 On human lids to drop the balmy dew.
 Neptune, with zeal increas'd, renews his care,
 And tow'ring in the foremost ranks of war, 420
 Indignant thus—Oh once of martial fame !
 O Greeks ! if yet ye can deserve the name !

This half-recover'd day shall Troy obtain ?
Shall Hector thunder at your ships again ?
Lo still he vaunts, and threats the fleet with fires, 425
While stern Achilles in his wrath retires.
One hero's loss too tamely you deplore,
Be still yourselves, and we shall need no more.
Oh yet, if glory any bosom warms,
Brace on your firmest helms, and stand to arms : 430
His strongest spear each valiant Grecian wield,
Each valiant Grecian seize his broadest shield ;
Let, to the weak, the lighter arms belong,
The pond'rous targe be wielded by the strong :
(Thus arm'd) not Hector shall our presence stay ; 435
Myself, ye Greeks ! myself will lead the way :
The troops assent ; their martial arms they change,
The busy chiefs their banded legions range.
The kings, tho' wounded and oppress'd with pain,
With helpful hands themselves assist the train. 440
The strong and cumb'rous arms the valiant wield,
The weaker warrior takes a lighter shield.
Thus sheath'd in shining brass ; in bright array,
The legions march, and Neptune leads the way,
His brandish'd faulchion flames before their eyes, 445
Like lightning flashing thro' the frighted skies.
Clad in his might th' earth-shaking pow'r appears ;
Pale mortals tremble, and confess their fears.
Troy's great defender stands alone unaw'd,
Arms his proud host, and dares oppose a god : 450
And lo ! the god, and wond'rous man appear !
The sea's stern ruler there, and Hector here.
The roaring main, at her great master's call,
Rose in huge ranks, and form'd a watery wall
Around the ships : seas hanging o'er the shores, 455
Both armies join : earth thunders, ocean roars.
Not half so loud the bellowing deeps resound,
When stormy winds disclose the dark profound ;
Less loud the winds, that from th' Æolian hall 459
Roar thro' the woods, and make whole forests fall ;
Less loud the woods, when flames in torrents pour,
Catch the dry mountain, and its shades devour.
With such a rage the meeting hosts are driv'n,
And such a clamour shakes the sounding heav'n.

The first bold jav'lin urg'd by Hector's force, 465
Direct at Ajax' bosom wing'd its course ;
But there no pass the crossing belts afford,
(One brac'd his shield, and one sustain'd his sword.)
'Then back the disappointed Trojan drew;
And curs'd the lance that unavailing flew : 470
But 'scap'd not Ajax ; his tempestuous hand
A pond'rous stone up-heaving from the sand,
(Where heaps laid loose beneath the warrior's feet,
Or serv'd to ballast, or to prop the fleet),
Toss'd round and round, the missive marble flings ;
On the raz'd shield the falling ruin rings, 476
Full on his breast and throat with force descends ;
Nor deaden'd there its giddy fury spends,
But whirling on, with many a fiery round,
Smokes in the dust, and ploughs into the ground. 480
As when the bolt, red-hissing from above,
Darts on the consecrated plant of Jove,
The mountain oak in flaming ruin lies,
Black from the blow, and smokes of sulphur rise ;
Stiff with amaze the pale beholders stand, 485
And own the terrors of th' almighty hand !
So lies great Hector prostrate on the shore ;
His slacken'd hand deserts the lance it bore ;
His following shield the fallen chief o'erspread ;
Beneath his helmet dropp'd his fainting head ; 490
His load of armour sinking to the ground,
Clanks on the field ; a dead and hollow sound.
Loud shouts of triumph fill the crowded plain :
Greece sees in hope, Troy's great defender slain :
All spring to seize him ; storms of arrows fly ; 495
And thicker jav'lins intercept the sky.
In vain an iron tempest hisses round ;
He lies protected and without a wound.
Polydamas, Agenor the divine,
The pious warrior of Anchises line, 500
And each bold leader of the Lycian band ;
With cov'ring shields (a friendly circle) stand.
His mournful followers, with assistant care
The groaning hero to his chariot bear ;
His foaming coursers, swifter than the wind, 505
Speed to the town, and leave the war behind,

When now they touch'd the mead's enamel'd side,
Where gentle Xanthus rolls his easy tide,
With watry drops the chief they sprinkle round,
Plac'd on the margin of the flow'ry ground. 510

Rais'd on his knees he now ejects the gore ;
Now faints anew, low sinking on the shore ;
By fits he breathes, half views the fleeting skies,
And seals again, by fits, his swimming eyes.

Soon as the Greeks the chiefs retreat beheld, 515
With double fury each invades the field.

Oilean Ajax first his jav'lin sped,
Pierc'd by whose point the son of Enops bled ;
(Satnius the brave, whom beauteous Neis bore
Amidst her flocks on Satnio's silver shore ;)
Struck thro' the belly's rim, the warrior lies 520
Supine, and shades eternal veil his eyes.

An arduous battle rose around the dead ;
By turns the Greeks ; by turns the Trojans bled.

Fir'd with revenge, Polydamas drew near, 525

And at Prothœner shook the trembling spear
The driving jav'lin thro' his shoulder thrust,
He sinks to earth, and grasps the bloody dust.
Lo thus, the victor cries, we rule the field,
And thus their arms the race of Panthus wield : 530

From this unerring hand there flies no dart
But bathes its point within a Grecian heart.

Propt on that spear to which thou ow'st thy fall,
Go, guide thy darksome steps to Pluto's dreary hall !

He said, and sorrow touch'd each Argive breast :
The soul of Ajax burn'd above the rest, 536

As by his side the groaning warrior fell,
At the fierce foe he launch'd his piercing steel ;
The foe reclining, shunn'd the flying death :
But fate, Archelochus, demands thy breath : 540

Thy lofty birth no succour could impart,
The wings of death o'ertook thee on the dart,

Swift to perform heav'n's fatal will it fled,
Full on the juncture of the neck and head,
And took the joint, and cut the nerves in twain : 545

The drooping head first tumbled to the plain.

So just the stroke, that yet the body stood
Erect, then roll'd along the sands in blood.

Here, proud Polydamas, here turn thy eyes !
(The tow'ring Ajax loud-insulting cries ;)
Say, is this chief extended on the plain, 550
A worthy vengeance for Prothœnor slain ?
Mark well his port ! his figure and his face
Nor speak him vulgar, nor of vulgar race ;
Some lines, methinks, may make his lineage known,
Antenor's brother, or perhaps his son. 556

He spake, and smil'd severe, for well he knew
The bleeding youth ; Troy sadden'd at the view.
But furious Acamas aveng'd his cause ;
As Promachus his slaughter'd brother draws, 560
He pierc'd his heart — Such fate attends you all,
Proud Argives ! destin'd by our arms to fall.
Nor Troy alone, but haughty Greece shall share
The toils, the sorrows, and the wounds of war.
Behold your Promachus depriv'd of breath, 565
A victim ow'd to my brave brother's death.
Not unappeas'd he enters Pluto's gates,
Who leaves a brother to revenge his fate.

Heart-piercing anguish struck the Grecian host,
But touch'd the breast of bold Peneleus most ; 570
At the proud boaster he directs his course ;
The boaster flies, and shuns superior force.
But young Ilioneus receiv'd the spear ;
Ilioneus, his father's only care :
(Phorbas the rich, of all the Trojan train, 575
Whom Hermes lov'd, and taught the arts of gain ;)
Full in his eye the weapon chanc'd to fall,
And from the fibres scoop'd the rooted ball,
Drove thro' the neck, and hurl'd him to the plain :
He lifts his miserable arms in vain ! 580
Swift his broad faulchion fierce Peneleus spread,
And from the spouting shoulders struck his head ;
To earth at once the head and helmet fly ;
The lance, yet sticking thro' the bleeding eye,
The victor seiz'd ; and as aloft he shook 585
The goary visage, thus insulting spoke.

'Trojans ! your great Ilioneus behold !
Haste, to his father let the tale be told ;
Let his high roofs resound with frantic woe,
Such as the house of Promachus must know ; 590

Let doleful tidings greet his mother's ear,
Such as to Promachus' sad spouse we bear ;
When we victorious shall to Greece return,
And the pale matron in our triumphs mourn.

Dreadful he spoke, then toss'd the head on high ;
The Trojans hear, they tremble, and they fly : 596
Aghast they gaze around the fleet and wall,
And dread the ruin that impends on all.

Daughters of Jove ! that on Olympus shine,
Ye all-beholding all-recording nine ! 600
O say, when Neptune made proud Ilion yield,
What chief, what hero first embru'd the field ?
Of all the Grecians what immortal name,
And whose blest trophies, will ye raise to fame ?

Thou first, great Ajax ! on th' ensanguin'd plain
Laid Hyrtius leader of the Mysian train. 606
Phalces and Mermer, Nestor's son o'erthrew ;
Bold Merion, Morys and Hippotion slew.

Strong Periphætès and Prothoon bled,
By Teucer's arrows mingled with the dead. 610
Pierc'd in the flank by Menelaus' steel,
His people's pastor, Hyperenor fell ;

Eternal darkness wrapt the warrior round,
And the fierce soul came rushing thro' the wound.
But stretch'd in heaps before Oileus' son, 615
Fall mighty numbers, mighty numbers run ;
Ajax the less, of all the Grecian race
Skill'd in pursuit, and swiftest in the chace.

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XV.

The Argument.

The fifth battle, at the ships; and the acts of Ajax.

JUPITER awaking, sees the Trojans repulsed from the trenches, Hector in a swoon, and Neptune at the head of the Greeks: he is highly incensed at the artifice of Juno who appeases him by her submissions; she is then sent to Iris and Apollo. Juno, repairing to the assembly of the gods, attempts with extraordinary address to incense them against Jupiter: in particular, she touches Mars with a violent resentment: he is ready to take arms, but is prevented by Minerva. Iris and Apollo obey the orders of Jupiter; Iris commands Neptune to leave the battle, to which, after much reluctance and passion, he consents. Apollo re-inspires Hector with vigour, brings him back to the battle, marches before him with his *Ægis*, and turns the fortune of the fight. He breaks down great part of the Grecian wall: the Trojans rush in, and attempt to fire the first line of the fleet, but are, as yet, repelled by the greater Ajax with a prodigious slaughter.

NOW in swift flight they pass the trench profound,
And many a chief lay gasping on the ground:
Then stopp'd and panted, where the chariots lie;
Fear on their cheek, and horror in their eye.
Meanwhile, awaken'd from his dream of love, 5
On Ida's summit sat imperial Jove:
Round the wide fields he cast a careful view,
There saw the Trojans fly, the Greeks pursue;

These proud in arms, those scatter'd o'er the plain,
And, 'midst the war, the monarch of the main. 10

Not far, great Hector on the dust he spies,
(His sad associates round with weeping eyes,)
Ejecting blood, and panting yet for breath,
His senses wand'ring to the verge of death.
'The god beheld him with a pitying look, 15
And thus, incens'd, to fraudulent Juno spoke.

O thou, still adverse to th' eternal will,
For ever studious in promoting ill!
Thy arts have made the godlike Hector yield,
And driv'n his conqu'ring squadrons from the field. 20
Can'st thou, unhappy in thy wiles! withstand
Our pow'r immense, and brave the almighty hand?
Hast thou forgot, when bound and fix'd on high,
From the vast concave of the spangled sky,
I hung thee trembling, in a golden chain, 25
And all the raging gods oppos'd in vain?
Headlong I hurl'd them from the Olympian hall,
Stunn'd in the whirl, and breathless with the fall.

For godlike Hercules these deeds were done;
Nor seem'd the vengeance worthy such a son; 30
When, by thy wiles induc'd, fierce Boreas tost
The shipwreck'd hero on the Coan coast:
Him thro' a thousand forms of death I bore,
And sent to Argos, and his native shore.

Hear this, remember, and our fury dread, 35
Nor pull th' unwilling vengeance on thy head;
Lest arts and blandishments successful prove,
'Thy soft deceits, and well-dissembled love.

'The thund'rer spoke: imperial Juno mourn'd,
And, trembling, these submissive words return'd. 40

By ev'ry oath that pow'rs immortal ties,
The foodful earth, and all-infolding skies,
By thy black waves, tremendous Styx! that flow
Thro' the drear realms of gliding ghosts below:
By the dread honours of thy sacred head, 45
And that unbroken vow, our virgin bed!

Not by my arts the ruler of the main
Steeps Troy in blood, and ranges round the plain:
By his own ardour, his own pity sway'd
To help his Greeks: he fought and disobey'd: 50

Else had thy Juno better counsels giv'n,
And taught submission to the sire of heav'n.

Think'st thou with me? fair empress of the skies!
(Th' immortal father with a smile replies!)

Then soon the haughty sea-god shall obey, 55

Nor dare to act but when we point the way.

If truth inspires thy tongue, proclaim our will

To yon bright synod on th' Olympian hill;

Or high decree let various Iris know,

And call the god that bears the silver bow. 60

Let her descend, and from th' embattl'd plain

Command the sea-god to his watry reign:

While Phœbus hastes, great Hector to prepare

To rise afresh, and once more wake the war;

His lab'ring bosom reinspirer with breath, 65

And calls his senses from the verge of death.

Greece chas'd by Troy even to Achilles' fleet,

Shall fall by thousands at the hero's feet.

He not untouch'd with pity to the plain

Shall send Patroclus, but shall send in vain. 70

What youth he slaughters under Ilion's walls?

Ev'n my lov'd son, divine Sarpedon falls!

Vanquish'd at last by Hector's lance he lies.

Then, nor till then, shall great Achilles rise,

And lo! that instant, godlike Hector dies. 75

From that great hour the war's whole fortune turns,

Pallas assists, and lofty Ilion burns.

Not till that day shall Jove relax his rage;

Nor one of all the heav'nly host engage

In aid of Greece. The promise of a god 80

I gave, and seal'd it with the almighty nod,

Achilles' glory to the stars to raise;

Such was our word, and fate the word obeys.

The trembling queen (th' almighty order giv'n)

Swift from th' Idæan summit shot to heav'n. 85

As some way-faring man, who wanders o'er

In thought, a length of lands he trode before,

Sends forth his active mind from place to place,

Joins hill to dale, and measures space with space; 90

So swift flew Juno to the blest abodes,

If thought of man can match the speed of gods.

There sat the pow'rs in awful synod plac'd,
They bow'd and made obeisance as she pass'd,
Thro' all the brazen dome : with goblets crown'd
They hail her queen : the nectar streams around. 95
Fair Themis first presents the golden bowl,
And anxious asks what cares disturb her soul?

To whom the white-arm'd goddess thus replies.
Enough thou know'st the tyrant of the skies,
Severely bent his purpose to fulfil, 100
Unmov'd his mind, and unrestrain'd his will.
Go thou, the feasts of heav'n attend thy call :
Bid the crown'd nectar circle round the hall ;
But Jove shall thunder thro' th' æthereal dome
Such stern decrees, such threaten'd woes to come, 105
As soon shall freeze mankind with dire surprize,
And damp th' eternal banquets of the skies.

The goddess said, and sullen took her place ;
Blank horror sadden'd each celestial face,
To see the gath'ring grudge in ev'ry breast, 110
Smiles on her lips a spleenful joy exprest,
While on her wrinkled front, and eye-brow bent,
Sat steadfast care, and low'ring discontent.
Thus she proceeds—Attend, ye pow'rs above,
But know, 'tis madness to contest with Jove : 115
Supreme he sits : and sees in pride of sway,
Your vassal godheads grudgingly obey ;
Fierce in the majesty of pow'r controuls,
Shakes all the thrones of heav'n, and bends the poles.
Submit immortals ! all he wills obey, 120
And thou great Mars, begin and shew the way.
Behold Ascalaphus ! behold him die,
But dare not murmur, dare not vent a sigh ;
Thy own lov'd boasted offspring lies o'erthrown
If that lov'd boasted offspring be thy own. 125

Stern Mars, with anguish for his slaughter'd son,
Smote his rebelling breast, and fierce begun.
Thus then, immortals ! thus shall Mars obey :
Forgive me, gods, and yield my vengeance way :
Descending first to yon forbidden plain, 130
The god of battle dares avenge the slain ;
Dares, tho' the thunder, bursting o'er my head,
Should hurl me blazing on those heaps of dead.

With that, he gives command to Fear and Flight
 To join his rapid coursers for the fight : 135
 Then grim in arms, with hasty vengeance flies ;
 Arms, that reflect a radiance thro' the skies.
 And now had Jove, by bold rebellion driv'n,
 Discharg'd his wrath on half the host of heav'n ;
 But Pallas springing thro' the bright abode, 140
 Starts from her azure throne to calm the god.
 Struck for th' immortal race with timely fear,
 From frantic Mars she snatch'd the shield and spear ;
 Then the huge helmet lifting from his head,
 ' Thus, to th' impetuous homicide she said. 145

By what wild passion, furious ! art thou tost !
 Striv'st thou with Jove ? thou art already lost.
 Shall not the 'Thund'rer's dread command restrain,
 And was imperial Juno heard in vain ?
 Back to the skies would'st thou with shame be driv'n,
 And in thy guilt involve the host of heav'n ? 151
 Ilion and Greece no more shall Jove engage,
 The skies would yield an ampler scene of rage,
 Guilty and guiltless find an equal fate,
 And one vast ruin whelm th' Olympian state. 155
 Cease then thy offsprings death unjust to call,
 Heroes as great have dy'd, and yet shall fall.
 Why should heav'n's law with foolish man comply,
 Exempted from the race ordain'd to die ?

This menace fix'd the warrior to his throne, 160
 Sullen he sat, and curb'd the rising groan.
 Then Juno call'd, Jove's orders to obey,
 The winged Iris, and the god of day.
 Go wait the 'Thund'rer's will (Saturnia cry'd)
 On yon tall summit of the fountful Ide ; 165
 There in the father's awful presence stand,
 Receive, and execute his dread command.

She said, and sat : the god that gilds the day,
 And various Iris, wing their airy way.
 Swift as the wind, to Ida's hills they came, 170
 (Fair nurse of fountains, and of savage game :)
 There sat th' Eternal : he, whose nod controuls
 The trembling world, and shakes the steady poles.
 Veil'd in a mist of fragrance him they found,
 With clouds of gold and purple circled round. 175

Well-pleas'd the Thund'rer saw their earnest care,
And prompt obedience to the queen of air;
Then (while a smile serenest his awful brow)
Commands the goddess of the show'ry bow.

Iris! descend, and what we here ordain 180
Report to yon mad tyrant of the main.

Bid him from fight to his own deeps repair,
Or breathe from slaughter in the fields of air.
If he refuse then let him timely weigh 185
Our elder birth-right, and superior sway.

How shall his rashness stand the dire alarms,
If heav'n's omnipotence descend in arms?
Strives he with me, by whom his pow'r was giv'n,
And is there equal to the Lord of heav'n?

Th' almighty spoke; the goddess wing'd her flight
To sacred Ilion from th' Idæan height. 191

Swift as the rattling hail, or fleecy snows,
Drive thro' the skies, when Boreas fiercely blows;
So from the clouds descending Iris falls,
And to blue Neptune thus the goddess calls. 195

Attend the mandate of the sire above,
In me behold the messenger of Jove:
He bids thee from forbidden wars repair
'To thy own deeps, or to the fields of air.
This, if refus'd, he bids thee timely weigh 200
His elder birth-right, and superior sway.

How shall thy rashness stand the dire alarms,
If heav'n's omnipotence descend in arms?
Striv'st thou with him, by whom all pow'r is giv'n?
And art thou equal to the Lord of heav'n? 205

What means the haughty sov'reign of the skies?
(The king of ocean thus, incens'd, replies:)

Rule as he will his portion'd realms on high;
No vassal god, nor of his train, am I.
Three brother deities from Saturn came, 210

And ancient Rhea, earth's immortal dame:
Assign'd by lot our triple rule we know,
Infernal Pluto sways the shades below;
O'er the wide clouds, and o'er the starry plain,
Ethereal Jove extends his high domain: 215

My court beneath the hoary waves I keep,
And hush the roaring of the sacred deep;

Olympus, and this earth in common ly ;
 What claim has here the tyrant of the sky !
 Far in the distant clouds let him controul 220
 And awe the younger brothers of the pole :
 There to his children his commands be giv'n,
 The trembling, servile, second race of heav'n.
 And must I then, said she, O sire of floods !
 Bear this fierce answer to the king of gods ? 225
 Correct it yet, and change thy rash intent ;
 A noble mind disdains not to repent.
 To elder brothers guardian fiends are giv'n,
 To scourge the wretch insulting them and heav'n.
 Great is the profit, thus the god rejoin'd, 230
 When ministers are blest with prudent mind :
 Warn'd by thy words, to pow'rful Jove I yield,
 And quit, tho' angry, the contended field.
 Not but his threats with justice I disclaim,
 The same our honours, and our birth the same. 235
 If yet, forgetful of his promise giv'n
 To Hermes, Pallas, and the queen of heav'n ;
 To favour Ilion that perfidious place,
 He breaks his faith with half th' æthereal race ;
 Give him to know, unless the Grecian train 240
 Lay yon proud structures level with the plain,
 Howe'er th' offence by other gods be past,
 The wrath of Neptune shall for ever last.
 Thus speaking, furious from the field he strode,
 And plung'd into the bosom of the flood. 245
 The Lord of 'Thunders from his lofty height
 Beheld, and thus bespoke the source of light.
 Behold ! the god whose liquid arms are hurl'd
 Around the globe, whose earthquakes rock the world,
 Desists at length his rebel-war to wage. 250
 Seeks his own seas and trembles at our rage ;
 Else had my wrath, heav'n's thrones all shaking round,
 Burn'd to the bottom of the seas profound ;
 And all the gods that round old Saturn dwell,
 Had heard the thunders to the deeps of hell. 255
 Well was the crime, and well the vengeance spar'd :
 Ev'n pow'r immense had found such battle hard.
 Go thou, my son ! the trembling Greeks alarm,
 Shake my broad Ægis on thy active arm,

Be godlike Hector thy peculiar care, 260
Swell his bold heart, and urge his strength to war :
Let Ilion conquer, till th' Achaian train
Fly to their ships and Hellespont again ;
Then Greece shall breathe from toils—The godhead said :
His will divine the son of Jove obey'd. 265
Nor half so swift the sailing falcon flies,
That drives a turtle thro' the liquid skies ;
As Phœbus, shooting from the Idæan brow,
Glides down the mountain to the plain below.
There Hector seated by the stream he sees, 270
His sense returning with the coming breeze ;
Again his pulses beat, his spirits rise,
Again his lov'd companions meet his eyes ;
Jove thinking of his pains, they past away,
'To whom the god who gives the golden day. 275
Why sits great Hector from the field so far,
What grief, what wound, with-holds him from the war ?
The fainting hero, as the vision bright
Stood shining o'er him, half unseal'd his sight :
What blest immortal, what commanding breath, 280
Thus wakens Hector from the sleep of death ?
Has fame not told, how, while my trusty sword
Bath'd Greece in slaughter, and her battle gor'd,
The mighty Ajax with a deadly blow
Had almost sunk me to the shades below ? 285
Ev'n yet, methinks, the gliding ghosts I spy,
And hell's black horrors swim before my eye.
To him, Appollo. Be no more dismay'd ;
See, and be strong ! the Thund'rer sends thee aid ;
Behold ! thy Phœbus shall his arms employ, 290
Phœbus, propitious still to thee and Troy.
Inspire thy warriors then with manly force,
And to the ships impel thy rapid horse :
Ey'n I will make thy fiery coursers way,
And drive the Grecians headlong to the sea. 295
Thus to bold Hector spoke the son of Jove,
And breath'd immortal ardour from above.
As when the pamper'd steed, with reins unbound]
Breaks from his stall, and pours along the ground ;
With ample strokes he rushes to the flood, 300
To bathe his sides, and cool his fiery blood :

His head, now freed, he tosses to the skies,
 His main dishevel'd o'er his shoulders flies :
 He snuffs the females in the well-known plain,
 And springs, exulting, to his fields again : 303
 Urg'd by the voice divine, thus Hector flew,
 Full of the god ; and all his hosts pursue.
 As when the force of men and dogs combin'd,
 Invade the mountain goat, or branching hind ;
 Far from the hunter's rage secure they ly 310
 Close in the rock, not fated yet to die,
 When, lo ! a lion shoots across the way !
 They fly at once the chasers and the prey.
 So Greece, that late in conqu'ring troops pursu'd,
 And mark'd their progress thro' the ranks in blood,
 Soon as they see the furious chief appear, 316
 Forget to vanquish, and consent to fear.
 Thoas with grief observ'd his dreadful course,
 Thoas, the bravest of th' Ætolian force ;
 Skill'd to direct the jav'lin's distant flight, 320
 And bold to combat in the standing fight :
 Nor more in councils fam'd for solid sense,
 Than winning words and heav'nly eloquence.
 Gods ? what portent, he cry'd, these eyes invades ?
 Lo ! Hector rises from the Stygian shades ! 325
 We saw him, late, by thund'ring Ajax kill'd :
 What god restores him to the frighted field ;
 And, not content that half of Greece lie slain,
 Pours new destruction on her sons again ?
 He comes not, Jove ! without thy pow'rful will ; 330
 Lo ! still he lives, pursues, and conquers still !
 Yet hear my counsel, and his worst withstand,
 The Greeks main body to the fleet command ;
 But let the few whom brisker spirits warm,
 Stand the first onset, and provoke the storm ; 335
 Thus point your arms : and when such foes appear,
 Fierce as he is, let Hector learn to fear.

The warrior spoke, the list'ning Greeks obey,
 Thick'ning their ranks, and form a deep array,
 Each Ajax, Teucer, Merion gave command, 340
 The valiant leader of the Cretan band,
 And Mars-like Meges : these the chiefs excite,
 Approach the foe, and meet the coming fight.

Behind unnumber'd multitudes attend,
 To flank the navy and the shores defend. 345
 Full on the front the pressing Trojans bear,
 And Hector first came tow'ring to the war.
 Phœbus himself the rushing battle led;
 A veil of clouds involv'd his radiant head:
 High-held before him, Jove's enormous shield 350
 Portentous shone, and shaded all the field:
 Vulcan to Jove th' immortal gift consign'd,
 To scatter hosts, and terrify mankind.
 The Greeks expect the shock; the clamours rise
 From diff'rent parts, and mingle in the skies. 355
 Dire was the hiss of darts, by heroes flung,
 And arrows leaping from the bow-string sung;
 These drink the life of gen'rous warriors slain;
 Those guiltless fall and thirst for blood in vain.
 As long as Phœbus bore unmov'd the shield, 360
 Sat doubtful conquest hov'ring o'er the field;
 But when aloft he shakes it in the skies,
 Shouts in their ears and lightens in their eyes,
 Deep horror seizes ev'ry Grecian breast,
 Their force is humbled, and their fear confest. 365
 So flies a herd of Oxen, scatter'd wide,
 No swain to guard them, and no day to guide,
 When two fell lions from the mountain come,
 And spread the carnage thro' the shady gloom.
 Impending Phœbus pours around them fear, 370
 And Troy and Hector thunder in the rear.
 Heaps fall on heaps: the slaughter Hector leads;
 First great Arcesilas, then Stichius bleeds;
 One to the bold Boetians ever dear,
 And one Menestheus' friend, and fam'd compeer. 375
 Medon and Iasus, Æneas sped;
 This sprung from Phelus, and th' Athenians led;
 But hapless Medon from Oileus came;
 Him Ajax honour'd with a brother's name,
 Tho' born of lawless love: from home expell'd, 380
 A banish'd man, in Phylace he dwell'd,
 Press'd by the vengeance of an angry wife,
 Troy ends, at last, his labours and his life.
 Mecystes next, Polydamas o'erthrew;
 And thee, brave Clonius! great Agenor slew. 385

By Paris, Deiochus inglorious dies,
 Pierc'd thro' the shoulder as he basely flies.
 Polites' arm laid Echiüs on the plain;
 Stretch'd on one heap, the victors spoil the slain.
 The Greeks dismay'd, confus'd, disperse or fall, 390
 Some seek the trench, some skulk behind the wall,
 While these fly trembling, others pant for breath,
 And o'er the slaughter stalks gigantic death.
 On rush'd bold Hector, gloomy as the night;
 Forbids to plunder, animates the fight; 395
 Points to the fleet: for, by the gods, who flies,
 Who dares but linger, by his hand he dies;
 No weeping sister his cold eye shall close,
 No friendly hand his fun'ral pyre compose.
 Who stops to plunder, in this signal hour, 400
 The birds shall tear him, and the dogs devour.
 Furious, he said; the smarting scourge resounds;
 The coursers fly; the smoking chariot bounds:
 The hosts rush on; loud clamours shake the shore;
 The horses thunder, earth and ocean roar! 405
 Apollo, planted at the trench's bound,
 Push'd at the bank: down sunk th' enormous mound:
 Roll'd in the ditch the heapy ruin lay;
 A sudden road! a long and ample way.
 O'er the dread fosse (a late impervious space) 410
 Now steeds, and men, and cars tumultuous pass.
 The wond'ring crowds the downward level trode:
 Before them flam'd the shield, and march'd the god.
 Then with his hand he shok the mighty wall:
 And, lo! the turrets nod, the bulwarks fall. 415
 Easy, as when ashore an infant stands,
 And draws imagin'd houses in the sands;
 The sportive wanton, pleas'd with some new play,
 Sweeps the slight works, and fashion'd domes away.
 Thus vanish, at thy touch, the tow'rs and walls; 420
 The toil of thousands in a moment falls!
 The Grecians gaze around with wild despair,
 Confus'd; and weary all the pow'rs with pray'r,
 Exhort their men, with praises, threats, commands;
 And urge the gods, with voices, eyes, and hands. 425
 Experienc'd Nestor chief obtests the skies,
 And weeps his country with a father's eyes.

O Jove ! if ever, on his native shore,
One Greek enrich'd thy shrine with offer'd gore ;
If e'er, in hope our country to behold, 450
We paid the fattest firstling of the fold ;
If e'er thou sign'st our wishes with thy nod,
Perform the promise of a gracious god !
This day, preserve our navies from the flame,
And save the reliques of the Grecian name. 435

Thus pray'd the sage : th' eternal gave consent,
And peals of thunder shook the firmament.
Presumptuous Troy mistook th' accepting sign,
And catch'd new fury at the voice divine.
As, when black tempests mix the seas and skies, 440
The roaring deeps in watry mountains rise,
Above the sides of some tall ship ascend,
Its womb they deluge, and its ribs they rend :
Thus loudly roaring and o'erpow'ring all,
Mount the thick Trojans up the Grecian wall ; 445
Legions on legions from each side arise :
Thick sound the keels ; the storm of arrows flies.
Fierce on the ships above, the cars below,
These wield the mace, and those the jav'lin throw,

While thus the thunder of the battle rag'd, 450
And lab'ring armies round the works engag'd ;
Still in the tent Patroclus sat, to tend
The good Eurypylus, his wounded friend.
He sprinkles healing balms, to anguish kind,
And adds discourse, the med'cine of the mind. 455
But when he saw, ascending up the fleet,
Victorious Troy ; then starting from his seat,
With bitter groans his sorrows he exprest,
He wrings his hands, he beats his manly breast.
'Tho' yet thy state requires redress, he cries, 460
Depart I must : what horrors strike my eyes ?
Charg'd with Achilles' high commands I go.
A mournful witness of this scene of woe :
I haste to urge him, by his country's care,
To rise in arms, and shine again in war. 465
Perhaps some fav'ring god his soul may bend ;
The voice is pow'rful of a faithful friend.

He spoke ; and speaking, swifter than the wind
Sprung from the tent, and left the war behind.

Th' embody'd Greeks the fierce attack sustain, 470
But strive, tho' num'rous to repulse in vain.
Nor could the Trojans, thro' that firm array,
Force, to the fleet and tents, th' impervious way.
As when a shipwright, with Palladian art,
Smooths the rough wood, and levels ev'ry part ; 475
With equal hand he guides his whole design,
By the just rule, and the directing line.
The martial leaders, with like skill and care,
Preserv'd their line, and equal kept the war.
Brave deeds of arms thro' all the ranks were try'd,
And ev'ry ship sustain'd an equal tide. 481
At one proud bark, high-tow'ring o'er the fleet
Ajax the great, and godlike Hector meet ;
For one bright prize the matchless chiefs contend ;
Nor this the ships can fire, nor that defend ; 485
One kept the shore, and one the vessel trode ;
That fix'd as fate, this acted by a god.
The son of Clytius, in his daring hand,
The deck approaching, shakes a flaming brand ;
But pierc'd by Telamon's huge lance expires ; 490
Thund'ring he falls, and drops the extinguish'd fires.
Great Hector view'd him with a sad survey,
As stretch'd in dust before the stern he lay.
Oh ! all of Trojans, all of Lycian race !
Stand to your arms, maintain this arduous space, 495
Lo ! where the son of royal Clytius lies,
Ah save his arms, secure his obsequies !
This said, his eager jav'lin sought the foe :
But Ajax shunn'd the meditated blow.
Not vainly yet the forceful lance was thrown ; 500
It stretch'd in dust unhappy Lycophron :
An exile long, sustain'd at Ajax' board,
A faithful servant to a foreign lord ;
In peace, in war, for ever at his side,
Near his lov'd master, as he liv'd, he dy'd. 505
From the high poop he tumbles on the sand,
And lies a lifeless load, along the land.
With anguish Ajax views the piercing sight,
And thus inflames his brother to the fight.
Teucer, behold ! extended on the shore 510
Our friend, our lov'd companion ! now no more !

Dear as a parent, with a parent's care
To fight our wars, he left his native air.
This death deplor'd to Hector's rage we owe;
Revenge, revenge it on the cruel foe. 515
Where are those darts on which the fates attend?
And where the bow which Phœbus taught to bend?
Impatient Teucer, hast'ning to his aid,
Before the chief his ample bow display'd;
The well-stor'd quiver on his shoulder hung: 520
Then hiss'd his arrow, and the bow-string sung.
Clytus, Pisenor's son, renown'd in fame,
(To thee, Polydamas! an honour'd name,)
Drove thro' the thickest of the embattl'd plains
The startling steeds, and shook his eager reins. 525
As all on glory ran his ardent mind,
The pointed death arrests him from behind:
Thro his fair neck the thrilling arrow flies;
In youth's first bloom reluctantly he dies.
Hurl'd from the lofty seat, at distance far, 530
The headlong coursers spurn his empty car;
Till sad Polydamas the steeds restrain'd,
And gave, Astynous, to thy careful hand;
Then, fir'd to vengeance, rush'd amidst the foe,
Rage edg'd his sword, and strengthen'd ev'ry blow.
Once more bold Teucer, in his country's cause, 536
At Hector's breast a chosen arrow draws;
And had the weapon found the destin'd way,
Thy fall, great Trojan! had renown'd that day.
But Hector was not doom'd to perish then: 540
Th' all-wise disposer of the fates of men,
Imperial Jove, his present death withstands.
Nor was such glory due to Teucer's hands.
At his full stretch as the tough string he drew,
Struck by an arm unseen, it burst in two; 545
Down dropp'd the bow: the shaft with brazen head
Fell innocent, and on the dust lay dead.
Th' astonish'd archer to great Ajax cries;
Some god prevents our destin'd enterprize:
Some god, propitious to the Trojan foe, 550
Has, from my arm unfailing, struck the bow,
And broke the nerve my hands had twin'd with art,
Strong to impel the flight of many a dart.

Since heav'n commands it, Ajax made reply,
Dismiss the bow, and lay thy arrows by ; 555
Thy arms no less suffice the lance to wield,
And quit the quiver for the pond'rous shield.
In the first ranks indulge thy thirst of fame,
Thy brave example shall the rest inflame.
Fierce as they are, by long successes vain ; 560
To force our fleet, or ev'n a ship to gain,
Asks toil, and sweet, and blood : their utmost might
Shall find its match—No more : 'tis ours to fight.

Then Teucer laid his faithless bow aside ;
The four-fold buckler 'o'er his shoulder ty'd ; 565
On his brave head a crested helm he plac'd,
With nodding horse-hair formidably grac'd ;
A dart, whose point with brass refulgent shines,
The warrior wields ; and his great brother joins.

This Hector saw, and thus express'd his joy. 570
Ye troops of Lycia, Dardanus, and Troy !
Be mindful of yourselves, your ancient fame,
And spread your glory with the navy's flame.
Jove is with us ; I saw his hand, but now,
From the proud archer strike his vaunted bow. 575
Indulgent Jove ! how plain thy favours shine,
When happy nations bear the marks divine !
How easy then, to see the stinking state
Of realms accurst, deserted, reprobate !
Such is the fate of Greece, and such is ours : 580
Behold, ye warriors, and exert your pow'rs,
Death is the worst ; a fate which all must try ;
And, for our country, 'tis a bliss to die.
The gallant man, tho' slain in fight he be,
Yet leaves his nation safe, his children free ; 585
Entails a debt on all the grateful state ;
His own brave friends shall glory in his fate ;
His wife live honour'd, all his race succeed ;
And late posterity enjoy the deed !

This rous'd the soul in ev'ry Trojan breast : 590
The godlike Ajax next his Greeks address.

How long, ye warriors of the Argive race,
(To gen'rous Argos what a dire disgrace !)
How long on these curst confines will ye lie,
Yet undetermin'd, or to live, or die ! 595

What hopes remain, what methods to retire,
 If once your vessels catch the Trojan fire!
 Mark how the flames approach, how near the fall,
 How Hector calls, and Troy obeys his call!
 Not to the dance that dreadful voice invites, 600
 It calls to death, and all the rage of fights,
 'Tis now no time for wisdom or debates;
 To your own hands are trusted all your fates;
 And better far, in one decisive strife,
 One day should end our labour, or our life; 605
 Then keep this hard-got inch of barren sands,
 Still press'd, and press'd by such inglorious hands.
 The list'ning Grecians feel their leaders flame,
 And ev'ry kindling bosom pants for fame.
 Then mutual slaughters spread on either side; 610
 By Hector here the Phocian Schedius dy'd;
 There, pierc'd by Ajax, sunk Laodamas,
 Chief of the foot, of old Antenor's race.
 Polydamas laid Otus on the sand,
 The fierce commander of the Epian band. 615
 His lance bold Meges at the victor threw;
 The victor stooping, from the death withdrew;
 (That valu'd life, O Phœbus! was thy care;)
 But Cræsmus' bosom took the flying spear:
 His corps fell bleeding on the slipp'ry shore; 620
 His radiant arms triumphant Meges bore.
 Dolops, the son of Lampus, rushes on,
 Sprung from the race of old Laomedon,
 And fam'd for prowess in a well-fought field;
 He pierc'd the centre of his sounding shield: 625
 But Meges, Phyleus' ample breast plate wore,
 (Well known in fight on Selles' winding shore,
 For king Euphetes gave the golden mail,
 Compact and firm with many a jointed scale,) 630
 Which oft, in cities storm'd, and battles won,
 Had sav'd the father, and now saves the son.
 Full at the Trojan's head he urg'd his lance,
 Where the high plumes above the helmet dance,
 New ting'd with Tyrian dye: in dust below
 Shorn from the crest, the purple honours glow. 635
 Meantime their fight the Spartan king survey'd,
 And stood by Meges' side, a sudden aid,

Thro' Dolops' shoulder urg'd his forceful dart,
Which held its passage thro' the panting heart,
And issu'd at his breast. With thund'ring sound 640
The warrior falls, extended on the ground.

In rush the conqu'ring Greeks to spoil the slain ;
But Hector's voice excites his kindred train ;
The hero most, from Hicetaon sprung, 645
Fierce Melanippus, gallant, brave, and young.

He (ere to Troy the Grecians cross'd the main)
Fed his large oxen on Percote's plain ;
But when oppress'd, his country claim'd his care,
Return'd to Ilion, and excell'd in war :
For this, in Priam's court he held his place, 650
Belov'd no less than Priam's royal race.
Him Hector singled, as his troops he led,
And thus inflam'd him pointing to the dead.

Lo, Melanippus ! lo where Dolops lies :
And is it thus our royal kinsman dies ? 655
O'ermatch'd he falls ; to two at once a prey,
And, lo ! they bear the bloody arms away !
Come on—a distant war no longer wage,
But hand to hand thy country's foes engage :
Till Greece at once, and all her glory end ; 660
Or Ilion from her tow'ry height descend,
Heav'd from the lowest stone ; and bury all
In one sad sepulchre, one common fall.

Hector, thus said, rush'd forward on the foes :
With equal ardour Melanippus glows : 665
'Then Ajax thus—Oh Greeks ! respect your fame,
Respect yourselves, and learn an honest shame ;
Let mutual rev'rence mutual warmth inspire,
And catch from breast to breast the noble fire.
On valour's side the odds of combat lie, 670
The brave live glorious or lamented die ;
'The wretch that trembles in the field of fame,
Meets death, and worse than death, eternal shame.

His gen'rous sense he not in vain imparts ;
In-sunk, and rooted in the Grecian hearts. 675
'They join, they throng, they thicken at his call,
And flank thy navy with a brazen wall ;
Shields touching shields, in order blaze above,
And stop the Trojans, tho' impell'd by Jove.

Book XV.	HOMER'S ILIAD.	63
The fiery Spartan first, with loud applause, Warms the bold son of Nestor in his cause. Is there, he said, in arms a youth like you, So strong to fight, so active to pursue? Why stand you distant, nor attempt a deed? Lift the bold lance, and make some Trojan bleed.		680 685
He said, and backward to the lines retir'd, Forth rush'd the youth, with martial fury fir'd. Beyond the foremost ranks; his lance he threw, And round the black battalions cast his view, The troops of Troy recede with sudden fear, While the swift jav'lin hiss'd along in air. Advancing Melanippus met the dart With his bold breast, and felt it in his heart: Thund'ring he falls; his falling arms resound, And his broad buckler rings against the ground.		690 695
The victor leaps upon his prostrate prize; Thus on a roe the well-breath'd beagle flies, And rends his side, fresh-bleeding with the dart The distant hunter sent into his heart. Observing Hector to the rescue flew; Bold as he was, Antilochus withdrew.		700
So when a savage, ranging o'er the plain, Has torn the shepherd's dog, or shepherd swain; While, conscious of the deep, he glares around, And hears the gath'ring multitude resound, Timely he flies the yet untasted food, And gains the friendly shelter of the wood. So fears the youth; all Troy with shouts pursue, While stones and darts in mingled tempest flew; But enter'd in the Grecian ranks, he turns His manly breast, and with new fury burns.		705 710
Now on the fleet the tides of Trojans drove, Fierce to fulfil the stern decrees of Jove: The sire of gods, confirming Thetis' pray'r, 'The Grecian ardour quench'd in deep despair; But lifts to glory Troy's prevailing bands, Swells all their hearts, and strengthens all their hands. On Ida's top he waits with longing eyes, To view the navy blazing to the skies; Then, nor till then, the scale of war shall turn, The Trojans fly, and conquer'd Ilion burn.		715 720

These fates revolv'd in his almighty mind,
He raises Hector to the work design'd,
Bids him with more than mortal fury glow,
And drives him, like a lightning, on the foe. 725
So Mars, when human crimes for vengeance call,
Shakes his huge jav'lin, and whole armies fall.
Not with more rage a conflagration rolls,
Wraps the vast mountains, and involves the poles.
He foams with wrath; beneath his gloomy brow 730
Like fiery meteors his red eye-balls glow:
'The radiant helmet on his temples burns,
Waves when he nods, and lightens as he turns:
For Jove his splendor round the chief had thrown,
And cast the blaze of both the hosts on one. 735
Unhappy glories! for his fate was near,
Due to stern Pallas, and Pelides' spear:
Yet Jove deferr'd the death he was to pay,
And gave what fate allow'd, the honours of a day!
Now all on fire for fame, his breast, his eyes 740
Burn at each foe, and single ev'ry prize;
Still at the closest ranks, the thickest fight,
He points his ardour, and exerts his might.
'The Grecian phalanx, moveless as a tow'r
On all sides batter'd, yet resists his pow'r: 745
So some tall rock o'erhangs the hoary main,
By winds assail'd, by billows beat in vain,
Unmov'd it hears, above, the tempest blow,
And sees the watry mountains break below.
Girt in surrounding flames, he seems to fall 750
Like fire from Jove, and bursts upon them all:
Bursts as a wave that from the clouds impends,
And swell'd with tempests on the ship descends:
White are the decks with foam; the winds aloud
Howl o'er the masks, and sing thro' ev'ry shroud: 755
Pale, trembling, tir'd, the sailors freeze with fears;
And instant death on ev'ry wave appears.
So pale the Greeks the eyes of Hector meet,
The chief so thunders, and so shakes the fleet.
As when a lion rushing from his den, 760
Amidst the plain of some wide water'd fen,
(Where num'rous oxen, as at ease they feed,
At large expatiate o'er the ranker meed;)

Leaps on the herds before the herdsman's eyes,
The trembling herdsman far to distance flies : 765
Some lordly bull (the rest dispers'd and fled)
He singles out ; arrests, and lays him dead.

Thus from the rage of Jove-like Hector flew
All Greece in heaps : but one he seiz'd and slew ;
Mycenian Periphes, a mighty name, 770

In wisdom great, in arms well known to fame ;
The minister of stern Eurystheus' ire
Against Alcides, Copreus was his sire :

The son redeem'd the honours of the race,
A son as gen'rous as the sire was base : 775
O'er all his country's youth conspicuous far

In ev'ry virtue, or of peace or war :
But doom'd to Hector's stronger force to yield :
Against the margin of his ample shield

He struck his hasty foot : his heels up-sprung ; 780
Supine he fell ; his brazen helmet rung.

On the fall'n chief th' invading Trojan prest,
And plung'd the pointed jav'lin in his breast.
His circling friends, who strove to guard too late
Th' unhappy hero ; fled, or shar'd his fate. 785

Chas'd from the foremost line, the Grecian train
Now man the next, receding tow'rd the main :
Wedg'd in one body, at the tents they stand,
Wall'd round with sterns, a gloomy desp'rate band.
Now manly shame forbids the inglorious flight : 790
Now fear itself confines them to the fight :

Man courage breathes in man : but Nestor most
(The sage preserver of the Grecian host)
Exhorts, abjures, to guard these utmost shores,
And by their parents, by themselves, implores. 795

O friends ! be men : your gen'rous breasts inflame
With mutual honour, and with mutual shame !
Think of your hopes, your fortunes ; all the care
Your wives, your infants, and your parents share :
Think of each living father's rev'rend head : 800

Think of each ancestor with glory dead ;
Absent, by me they speak, by me they sue ;
They ask their safety, and their fame, from you :
The gods their fates on this one action lay,
And all are lost, if you desert the day, 805

He spoke, and round him breath'd heroic fires,
Minerva seconds what the sage inspires.
The mist of darkness Jove around them threw,
She clear'd, restoring all the war to view ;
A sudden ray shot beaming o'er the plain, 810
And shew'd the shores, the navy, and the main :
Hector they saw, and all who fly, or fight,
The scene wide op'ning to the blaze of light.
First of the field, great Ajax strikes their eyes,
His port majestic, and his ample size! 815
A pond'rous mace with studs of iron crown'd,
Full twenty cubits long he swings around ;
Nor fights like others fix'd to certain stands,
But looks a moving tow'r above the bands ;
High on the decks, with vast gigantic stride, 820
The godlike hero stalks from side to side.
So when a horseman from the wat'ry mead
(Skill'd in the manage of a bounding steed)
Drives four fair coursers, practis'd to obey,
To some great city thro' the public way ; 825
Safe in his art, as side by side they run,
He shifts his seat, and vaults from one to one ;
And now to this, and now to that he flies ;
Admiring numbers follow with their eyes.
From ship to ship thus Ajax swiftly flew, 830
No less the wonder of the warring crew.
As furious Hector thunder'd threats aloud,
And rush'd enrag'd before the Trojan crowd :
Then swift invades the ships, whose beaky proes
Lay rank'd contiguous on the bending shores : 835
So the strong eagle from his airy height,
Who marks the swans or cranes embody'd flight,
Stoops down impetuous, while they light for food,
And stooping, darkens with his wings the flood.
Jove leads him on with his almighty hand, 840
And breathes fresh spirits in his following band.
The warring nations meet, the battle roars,
Thick beats the combat on the sounding proes.
Thou would'st have thought, so furious was their sire,
No force could tame them, and no toil could tire : 845
As if new vigour from new fights thy won,
And the long battle was but then begun.

Greece, yet unconquer'd, kept alive the war,
Secure of death, confiding in despair ;
Troy, in proud hopes, already view'd the main 850
Bright with the blaze, and red with heroes slain !
Like strength is felt from hope, and from despair,
And each contends as his were all the war.

'Twas thou, bold Hector ! whose resistless hand
First seiz'd a ship on that contested strand : 855
The same which dead Protesilaus bore,
The first that touch'd th' unhappy Trojan shore :
For this, in arms the warring nation stood,
And bath'd their gen'rous breasts with mutual blood.
No room to poize the lance, or bend the bow ; 860
But hand to hand, and man to man they grow :
Wounded they wound ; and seek each other's hearts
With faulchions, axes, swords, and shorten'd darts.
The faulchions ring, shields rattle, axes sound,
Swords flash in air, or glitter on the ground ; 865
With streaming blood the slipp'ry shores are dy'd,
And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide.

Still raging Hector with his ample hand
Grasps the high stern, and gives this loud command.
Haste, bring the flames ! the toil of ten long years 870
Is finish'd : and the day desir'd appears !
This happy day with acclamations greet,
Bright with destruction of yon hostile fleet.
The coward counsels of a tim'rous throng
Of rev'rend dotards, check'd our glory long ! 875
Too long Jove lull'd us with lethargic charms,
But now in peals of thunder calls to arms :
In this great day he crowns our full desires,
Wakes all our force, and seconds all our fires.

He spoke—The warriors, at his fierce command, 880
Pour a new deluge on the Grecian band.
Ev'n Ajax paus'd, so thick the jav'lins fly,
Stept back, and doubted or to live or die.
Yet where the oars are plac'd, he stands to wait
What chief approaching dares attempt his fate ; 885
Ev'n to the last, his naval charge defends,
Now shakes his spear, now lifts, and now pretends ;
Ev'n yet, the Greeks with piercing shouts inspires,
Amidst attacks, and deaths, and darts, and fires.

Of friends ! O heroes ! names for ever dear, 890
Once sons of Mars, and thunderbolts of war !
Ah ! yet be mindful of your old renown,
Your great forefathers virtues and your own.
What aids expect you in this utmost strait ?
What bulwarks rising between you and fate ? 895
No aids, no bulwarks, your retreat attend,
No friends to help, no city to defend.
This spot is all you have, to lose or keep
'There stand the Trojans, and here rolls the deep.
'Tis hostile ground you tread ; your native lands 900
Far, far from hence ; your fates are in your hands.
Raging he spoke ; nor farther wastes his breath,
But turns his jav'lin to the work of death,
Whate'er bold Trojan arm'd his daring hands,
Against the sable ships with flaming brands, 905
So well the chief his naval weapon sped,
The luckless warrior at his stern lay dead :
Full twelve, the boldest, in a moment fell,
Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XVI.

The Argument

The sixth battle : the acts and death of Patroclus.

PATROCLUS (in pursuance of the request of Nestor in the eleventh book) intreats Achilles to suffer him to go to the assistance of the Greeks with Achilles' troops and armour. He agrees to it, but at the same time charges him to content himself with rescuing the fleet, without farther pursuit of the enemy. The armour, horses, soldiers, and officers of Achilles are described. Achilles offers a libation for the success of his friend, after which Patroclus leads the Myrmidons to battle. The Trojans, at the sight of Patroclus in Achilles's armour, taking him for that hero, are cast into the utmost consternation: he beats them off from the vessels, Hector himself flies, Sarpedon is killed, though Jupiter was averse to his fate. Several other particulars of the battle are described; in the heat of which, Patroclus, neglecting the orders of Achilles, pursues the foe to the walls of Troy, where Apollo repulses and disarms him, Euphorbus wounds him, and Hector kills him, which concludes the book.

SO warr'd both armies on th' ensanguin'd shore,
While the black vessels smok'd with human gore.
Meantime Patroclus to Achilles flies,
The streaming tears fall copious from his eyes;
Not faster, trickling to the plains below, 5
From the tall rock the sable waters flow.
Divine Pelides, with compassion mov'd,
Thus spoke, indulgent to his best-belov'd.

Patroclus say, what grief thy bosom bears,
 That flows so fast in these unmanly tears? 10
 No girl, no infant whom the mother keeps
 From her lov'd breast, with fonder passion weeps;
 Not more the mother's soul that infant warms,
 Clung to her knees, and reaching at her arms,
 Than thou hast mine! Oh tell me to what end 15
 Thy melting sorrows thus pursue thy friend?

Griev'st thou for me, or for my martial band?
 Or come sad tidings from our native land?
 Our fathers live, (our first, most tender care,)
 Thy good Menœtius breathes the vital air, 20
 And hoary Peleus yet extends his days,
 Pleas'd in their age to hear their children's praise.

Or may some meaner cause thy pity claim,
 Perhaps yon reliques of the Grecian name,
 Doom'd in their ships to sink by fire and sword, 25
 And pay the forfeit of their haughty lord?
 Whate'er the cause, reveal thy secret care,
 And speak those sorrows which a friend would share.

A sigh, that instant, from his bosom broke,
 Another follow'd, and Patroclus spoke. 30

Let Greece at length with pity touch thy breast,
 Thyself a Greek; and, once of Greeks the best!
 Lo! ev'ry chief that might her fate prevent,
 Lies pierc'd with wounds, and bleeding in his tent.
 Eurypylus, 'Tydides, Atreus' son, 35
 And wise Ulysses, at the navy groan,
 More for their country's wounds than for their own. }
 Their pain, soft arts of pharmacy can ease,
 Thy breast alone no lenitives appease.

May never rage like thine my soul enslave, 40
 O great in vain, unprofitably brave!
 Thy country slighted in her last distress,
 What friend, what man, from thee shall hope redress?
 No—men unborn, and ages yet behind,
 Shall curse that fierce, that unforgiving mind. 45

O man un pitying! if of man thy race;
 But sure thou spring'st not from a soft embrace,
 Nor ever am'rous hero caus'd thy birth,
 Nor ever tender goddess brought thee forth.

Some rugged rock's hard entrails gave thee form, 50
 And raging seas produc'd thee in a storm,
 A soul well suiting that tempestuous kind,
 So rough thy manners, so untam'd thy mind.

If some dire oracle thy breast alarm,
 If ought from Jove, or Thetis stop thy arm, 55
 Some beam of comfort yet on Greece may shine,
 If I but lead the Myrmidonian line:

Clad in thy dreadful arms if I appear,
 Proud 'Troy shall tremble, and desert the war :
 Without thy person Greece shall win the day 60
 And thy mere image chase her foes away.
 Press'd by fresh forces, her o'erlabour'd train
 Shall quit the ships, and Greece respire again.

Thus, blind to fate, with supplicating breath
 Thou begg'st his arms, and in his arms thy death. 65
 Unfortunately good ! a boding sigh
 Thy friend return'd ; and with it, this reply.

Patroclus ! thy Achilles knows no fears ;
 Nor words from Jove, nor oracles he hears ;
 Nor ought a mother's caution can suggest ; 70
 The tyrants pride lies rooted in my breast.

My wrongs, my wrongs, my constant thought engage,
 Those, my sole oracles, inspire my rage :
 I made him tyrant : gave him pow'r to wrong
 Ev'n me : I felt it ; and shall feel it long. 75

The maid, my black-ey'd maid, he forc'd away,
 Due to the toils of many a well-fought day ;
 Due to my conquest of her father's reign ;
 Due to the votes of all the Grecian train.

From me he forc'd her ; me, the bold and brave ; 80
 Disgrac'd, dishonour'd, like the meanest slave.
 But bear we this—the wrongs I grieve are past ;

'Tis time our fury should relent at last :
 I fix'd its date ; the day I wish'd appears :
 Now Hector to my ships his battle bears, 85 }
 The flames my eyes, the shouts invade my ears.

Go then, Patroclus ! court fair honour's charms
 In 'Troy's fam'd fields, and in Achilles' arms :
 Lead forth my martial Myrmidons to fight,
 Go save the fleets, and conquer in my right. 90

See the thin reliques of the baffled band ;
 At the last edge of yon deserted land ;
 Behold all Ilion on their ships descends ;
 How the cloud blackens ! how the storm impends !
 It was not thus, when, at my sight amaz'd, 95
 Troy saw and trembled, as this helmet blaz'd ;
 Had not th' injurious king our friendship lost,
 Yon ample trench had bury'd half her host,
 No camps, no bulwarks now the Trojans fear,
 Those are not dreadful, no Achilles there : 100
 No longer flames the lance of Tydeus' son ;
 No more your gen'ral calls his heroes on :
 Hector, alone, I hear ; his dreadful breath
 Commands your slaughter, or proclaims your death.
 Yet now, Patroclus, issue to the plain ; 105
 Now save the ships, the rising fires restrain,
 And give the Greeks to visit Greece again. }
 But heed my words, and mark a friends command,
 Who trusts his fame and honours in thy hand,
 And from thy deeds expects, th' Achaian host 110
 Shall render back the beauteous maid he lost :
 Rage uncontroul'd thro' all the hostile crew,
 But touch not Hector, Hector is my due.
 Tho' Jove in thunder should command the war,
 Be just, consult my glory, and forbear. 115
 The fleet once sav'd, desist from farther chace,
 Nor lead to Ilion's walls the Grecian race ;
 Some adverse god thy rashness may destroy ;
 Some god, like Phœbus, ever kind to Troy,
 Let Greece, redeem'd from this destructive strait, 120
 Do her own work ; and leave the rest to fate.
 Oh ! would to all th' immortal pow'rs above,
 Apollo, Pallas, and almighty Jove !
 That not one Trojan might be left alive,
 And not a Greek of all the race survive ; 125
 Might only we the vast destruction shun,
 And only we destroy th' accursed town !
 Such conf'rence held the chiefs : while on the strand,
 Great Jove with conquest crown'd the Trojan band.
 Ajax no more the sounding storm sustain'd, 130
 So thick the darts, an iron tempest rain'd

On his tir'd arm the weighty buckler hung ;
His hollow helm with falling jav'lin's rung ;
His breath, in quick short pantings, comes and goes ;
And painful sweat from all his members flows. 135

Spent and o'erpow'r'd, he barely breathes at most ;
Yet scarce an army stirs him from his post :
Dangers on dangers all around him grow,
And toil to toil, and woe succeeds to woe.

Say, Muses, thron'd above the starry frame, 140
How first the navy blaz'd with Trojan flame ?

Stern Hector wav'd his sword : and standing near
Where furious Ajax ply'd his ashen spear,
Full on the lance a stroke so justly sped,
That the broad faulchion lopp'd its brazen head : 145
His pointless spear the warrior shakes in vain ;
The brazen head falls sounding on the plain.
Great Ajax saw, and own'd the hand divine,
Confessing Jove, and trembling at the sign ;
Warn'd, he retreats. Then swift from all sides pour 150
The hissing brands ; thick streams the fiery show'r :
O'er the high stern the curling volumes rise,
And sheets of rolling smoke involve the skies.

Divine Achilles view'd the rising flames,
And smote his thigh, and thus aloud exclaims. 155
Arm, arm, Patroclus ! Lo, the blaze aspires !
The glowing ocean reddens with the fires.
Arm, ere our vessels catch the spreading flame ;
Arm, ere the Grecians be no more a name ;
I haste to bring the troops—The hero said ; 160
The friend with ardour, and with joy obey'd .

He cas'd his limbs in brass ; and first around
His manly legs, with silver buckles bound
The clasping greaves ; then to his breast applies
The flamy cuirass, of a thousand dyes ; 165
Emblaz'd with studs of gold his faulchion shone
In the rich belt, as in a starry zone :
Achilles' shield his ample shoulders spread,
Achilles' helmet nodded o'er his head :
Adorn'd in all his terrible array, 170
He flash'd around intolerable day.

Alone, untouch'd, Pelides' jav'lin stands,
Not to be pois'd but by Pelides' hands ;

From Pelion's shady brow the plant entire
 Old Chiron rent, and shap'd it for his sire ; 175
 Whose son's great arm alone the weapon wields,
 The death of heroes, and the dread of fields.
 Then brave Automedon (an honour'd name,
 The second to his lord in love and fame,
 In peace his friend, and partner of the war) 180
 The winged coursers harness'd to the car.
 Xanthus and Balius, of immortal breed,
 Sprung from the wind, and like the wind in speed :
 Whom the wing'd harpy, swift Podarge, bore,
 By Zephyr pregnant on the breezy shore. 185
 Swift Pedasus was added to their side,
 (Once great Aethion's now Achilles' pride,
 Who, like in strength, in swiftmess, and in grace,
 A mortal courser match'd th' immortal race.
 Achilles speeds from tent to tent, and warms 190
 His hardy Myrmidons to blood and arms.
 All breathing death, around their chief they stand,
 A grim, terrific, formidable band :
 Grim as voracious wolves, that seek the springs
 When scalding thirst their burning bowels wrings, 195
 (When some tall stag, fresh slaughter'd in the wood,
 Has drench'd their wide insatiate throats with blood,)
 To the black fount they rush, a hideous throng,
 With paunch distended, and with lolling tongue,
 Fire fills their eye, their black jaws belch the gore, 200
 And gorg'd with slaughter, still they thirst for more.
 Like furious rush'd the Myrmidonian crew ;
 Such their dread strength, and such their deathful view.
 High in the midst the great Achilles stands,
 Directs their order, and the war commands. 205
 He, lov'd of Jove, had launch'd for Ilion's shores
 Full fifty vessels, mann'd with fifty oars ;
 Five chosen leaders the fierce bands obey,
 Himself supreme in valour as in sway.
 First match'd Menestheus, of celestial birth, 210
 Deriv'd from thee, whose waters wash the earth,
 Divine Sperchius ! Jove-descended flood !
 A mortal mother mixing with a god.
 Such was Menestheus, but miscall'd by fame
 The son of Borus that espous'd the dame.

Eudorus next; whom Polymelt the gay,
Fam'd in the graceful dance, produc'd to-day.
Her, sly Cellenius lov'd, on her would gaze,
As with swift steps she form'd the running maze:
To her high chamber, from Diana's quire, 220
The god pursu'd her, urg'd, and crown'd his sire.
The son confess'd his father's heav'nly race,
And heir'd his mother's swiftness in the chace.
Strong Echeclus, blest in all those charms
That pleas'd a god, succeeded to her arms; 225
Not conscious of her love, long hid from fame,
With gifts of price he sought and won the dame:
Her secret offspring to her sire she bare;
Her sire caress'd him with a parent's care.

Pisander follow'd; matchless in his art 230
To wing the spear, or aim the distant dart;
No hand so sure of all th' Emathian line,
Or if a surer, great Patroclus! thine.

The fourth by Phœnix' grave command was grac'd,
Laerces' valiant offspring led the last. 235

Soon as Achilles with superior care
Had call'd the chiefs, and order'd all the war,
This stern remembrance to his troops he gave:
Ye far-fam'd Myrmidons, ye fierce and brave!
Think with what threats you dar'd the Trojan throng,
Think what reproach these ears endur'd so long, 241

' Stern son of Peleus, (thus ye us'd to say,
' While restless, raging in your ships you lay,)
' Oh nurs'd with gall, unknowing how to yield!
' Whose rage defrauds us of so fam'd a field. 245

' If that dire fury must for ever burn,
' What make we here? Return, ye chiefs, return!
Such were your words—Now, warriors, grieve no more.

Lo there the Trojans! bathe your swords in gore!
This day shall give you all your soul demands; 250
Glut all your hearts! and weary all your hands!

Thus while he rous'd the fire in ev'ry breast,
Close, and more close, the list'ning cohorts prest;
Ranks wedg'd in ranks; of arms a steely ring
Still grows, and spreads, and thickens round the king.
As when a circling wall the builder forms, 256
Or strength defensive against winds and storms,

Compacted stones the thick'ning work compose,
 And round him wide the rising structure grows.
 So helm to helm, and crest to crest they throng, 260
 Shield urg'd on shield, and man drove man along :
 Thick, undistinguish'd plumes, together join'd,
 Float in one sea, and wave before the wind.

Far o'er the rest, in glitt'ring pomp appear,
 There bold Automedon; Patroclus here; 265
 Brother's in arms, with equal fury fir'd;
 Two friends, two bodies with one soul inspir'd.

But mindful of the gods, Achilles went
 To the rich coffer in his shady tent :
 There lay on heaps his various garments roll'd, 270
 And costly furs, and carpets stiff with gold,
 (The presents of the silver-footed dame.)
 From thence he took a bowl, of antique frame,
 Which never man had stain'd with ruddy wine,
 Nor rais'd in off'rings to the pow'rs divine, 275
 But Peleus son; Peleus' son to none
 Had rais'd in off'rings but to Jove alone.

This ting'd with sulphur, sacred first to flame,
 He purg'd, and wash'd it in the running stream.
 Then cleans'd his hands : then fixing for a space 280
 His eyes on heav'n, his feet upon the place
 Of sacrifice, the purple draught he pour'd
 Forth in the midst : and thus the god implor'd.

O thou supreme ! high-thron'd all height above !
 O great Pelagic, Dodoncean Jove ! 285
 Who 'midst surrounding frosts, and vapours chill,
 Presid'st on bleak Dodona's vocal hill :
 (Whose groves, the Selli, race austere ! surround,
 Their feet unwash'd, their slumbers on the ground;
 Who hear, from rustling oaks, thy dark decrees ; 290
 And catch the fates, low-whisper'd in the breeze :)
 Hear, as of old ! Thou gav'st, at Thetis pray'r,
 Glory to me, and to the Greeks despair :

Lo to the dangers of the fighting field
 The best, the dearest of my friends I yield : 295
 Though still determin'd, to my ships confin'd,
 Patroclus gone, I stay but half behind,
 Oh ! be his guard thy providential care,
 Confirm his heart, and string his arm to war :

Press'd by his single force, let Hector see
His fame in arms not owing all to me. 300

But when the fleets are sav'd from foes and fire,
Let him with conquest and renown retire :
Preserve his arms, preserve his social train,
And safe return him to these eyes again ! 305

Great Jove consents to half the chief's request,
But heav'n's eternal doom denies the rest ;
To free the fleet was granted to his pray'r,
His safe return the winds disperst in air.
Back to his tent the stern Achilles flies, 310
And waits the combat with impatient eyes.

Meanwhile the troops beneath Patroclus' care,
Invade the Trojans, and commence the war.
As wasps, provok'd by children in their play,
Pour from their mansions by the broad high-way, 315
In swarms the guiltless traveller engage,
Whet all their stings, and call forth all their rage :
And rise in arms, and, with a gen'ral cry,
Assert their waxen domes, and buzzing progeny.
Thus from the tents the fervent legion swarms, 320
So loud their clamours, and so keen their arms.
Their raising rage Patroclus' breath inspires,
Who thus inflames them with heroic fires.

O warriors, partners of Achilles' praise !
Be mindful of your deeds in ancient days : 325
Your godlike master let your acts proclaim,
And add new glories to his mighty name.
Think, your Achilles sees you fight : be brave,
And humble the proud monarch whom you save.

Joyful they heard, and, kindling as he spoke, 330
Flew to the fleet, involv'd in fire and smoke.
From shore to shore the doubling shouts resound,
The hollow ships return a deeper sound.

The war stood still, and all around them gaz'd,
When great Achilles' shining armour blaz'd : 335
Troy saw, and thought the dread Achilles nigh,
At once they see, they tremble, and they fly.

Then first thy spear, divine Patroclus ! flew,
Where the war rag'd, and where the tumult grew.
Close to the stern of that fam'd ship, which bore 340
Unblest Protesilaus to Ilion's shore.

The great Pæonian, bold Pyræchmes, stood ;
(Who led his bands from Axius' winding flood ;)
His shoulder-blade receives the fatal wound,
The groaning warrior pants upon the ground. 345
His troops, that see their country's glory slain,
Fly diverse, scatter'd o'er the distant plain.
Patroclus' arm forbids the spreading fires,
And from the half-burn'd ship proud Troy retires :
Clear'd from the smoke the joyful navy lies : 350
In heaps on heaps the foe tumultuous lies ;
Triumphant Greece her rescu'd decks ascends,
And loud acclaim the starry region rends.
So when thick clouds inwrap the mountains head,
O'er heav'n's expanse like one black ceiling spread :
Sudden, the thund'rer, with a flashing ray, 356
Bursts thro' the darkness, and lets down the day :
The hills shine out, the rocks in prospect rise,
And streams, and vales, and forests strike the eyes ;
The smiling scene wide opens to the sight, 360
And all th' unmeasur'd æther flames with light.
But Troy repuls'd, and scatter'd o'er the plains,
Forc'd from the navy, yet the fight maintains.
Now ev'ry Greek some hostile hero slew,
But still the foremost, bold Patroclus flew ; 365
As Areilycus had turn'd him round,
Sharp in his thigh he felt the piercing wound ;
The brazen-pointed spear, with vigour thrown,
The thigh transfix'd, and broke the brittle bone :
Headlong he fell. Next Thoas was thy chance, 370
Thy breast, unarm'd receiv'd the Spartan lance.
Phylides' dart (as Amphiclus drew nigh)
His blow prevented, and transpierc'd his thigh,
Tore all the brawn, and rent the nerves away :
In darkness, and in death the warrior lay. 375
In equal arms two sons of Nestor stand,
And two bold brothers of the Lycian band ;
By great Antilochus, Atynmius dies,
Pierc'd in the flank, lamented youth ! he lies.
Kind Maris, bleeding in his brothers wound, 380
Defends the breathless carcase on the ground ;
Furious he flies, his murd'rer to engage,
But godlike Thrasymed prevents his rage.

Between his arm and shoulder aims a blow ;
 His arm falls spouting on the dust below : 385
 He sinks, with endless darkness cover'd o'er,
 And vents his soul effus'd with gushing gore.

Slain by two brothers, thus two brothers bleed,
 Sarpedon's friends, Amisodarus' seed ;
 Amisodarus, who, by furies led, 390
 The bane of men, abhorr'd Chimæra bred ;
 Skill'd in the dart in vain, his sons expire,
 And pay the forfeit of their guilty sire.

Stopp'd in the tumult Cleobulus lies,
 Beneath Oileus' arm, a living prize ! 395
 A living prize not long the Trojan stood,
 The thirsty faulchion drank his reeking blood :
 Plung'd in his throat the smoking weapon lies,
 Black death, and fate unpitying, seal his eyes.

Amid the ranks, with mutual thirst of fame, 400
 Lycon the brave, and fierce Peneleus, came ;
 In vain their jav'lines at each other flew,
 Now, met in arms, their eager swords they drew.

On the plum'd crest of his Bœotian foe,
 The daring Lycon aim'd a noble blow : 405
 The sword broke short ; but his Peneleus sped
 Full on the juncture of the neck and head :
 The head, divided by a stroke so just,
 Hung by the skin : the body sunk to dust.

O'ertaken Næmas by Merion bleeds, 410
 Pierc'd thro' the shoulder as he mounts his steeds ;
 Back from the car he tumbles to the ground,
 His swimming eyes eternal shades surround.

Next Erymas was doom'd his fate to feel,
 His open mouth receiv'd the Cretan steel : 415
 Beneath the brain the point a passage tore,
 Crush'd the thin bones, and drown'd the teeth in gore :
 His mouth, his eyes, his nostrils, pour a flood ;
 He sobs his soul out in the gush of blood.

As when the flocks, neglected by the swain. 420
 (Or kids, or lambs,) lie scatter'd o'er the plain,
 A troop of wolves th' unguarded charge survey,
 And rend the trembling, unresisting prey,
 Thus on the foe the Greeks impetuous came,
 Troy fled, unmindful of her former fame. 425

But still at Hector godlike Ajax aim'd,
Still, pointed at his breast, his jav'lin flam'd :
The Trojan chief, experienc'd in the field,
O'er his broad shoulder spread the massy shield,
Observ'd the storm of darts the Grecians pour, 430
And on his ringing buckler caught the show'r.
He sees for Greece the scale of conquest rise,
Yet stops, and turns, and saves his lov'd allies.

As when the hand of Jove a tempest forms,
And rolls the cloud to blacken heav'n with storms, 435
Dark o'er the fields th' ascending vapour flies,
And shades the sun, and blots the golden skies;
So from the ships, along the dusky plain,
Dire Flight and Terror drove the Trojan train.
Ev'n Hector fled; thro' heaps of disarray 440
The fiery coursers forc'd their lord away !
While far behind his Trojans fall confus'd,
Wedg'd in the trench, in one vast carnage bruis'd.
Chariots on chariots roll : the clashing spokes
Shock; while the madding steeds break short their yokes:
In vain they labour up the steepy mound, 446
Their charioteers lie foaming on the ground.
Fierce on the rear, with shouts, Patroclus flies,
'Tumultuous clamours fill the fields and skies ;
'Thick drifts of dust involve their rapid flight, 450
Clouds rise on clouds, and heav'n is snatch'd from sight.
'Th' affrighted steeds, their dying lords cast down,
Scour o'er the fields, and stretch to reach the town.
Loud o'er the rout was heard the victor's cry,
Where the war bleeds, and where the thickest die, 455
Where horse, and arms, and chariots, lie o'erthrown,
And bleeding heroes under axles groan.
No stop, no check the steeds of Peleus knew,
From bank to bank th' immortal courses flew,
High-bounding o'er the fosse : the whirling car 460
Smokes thro' the ranks, o'ertakes the flying war,
And thunders after Hector : Hector flies,
Patroclus shakes his lance ; but fate denies.
Not with less noise, with less impetuous force,
The tide of Trojans urge their desp'rate course, 465
Than when in autumn Jove his fury pours,
And earth is loaden with incessant show'rs ;

(When guilty mortals break th' eternal laws,
Or judges, brib'd, betray the righteous cause;) 470
From their deep beds he bids the rivers rise,
And opens all the flood-gates of the skies:
Th' impetuous torrents from their hills obey,
Whole fields are drown'd, and mountains swept away;
Loud roars the deluge till it meets the main,
And trembling man sees all his labours vain. 475

And now the chief (the foremost troops repell'd)
Back to the ships his destin'd progress held,
Bore down half Troy in his resistless way,
And forc'd the routed ranks to stand the day.
Between the space where silver Simois flows, 480
Where lay the fleet, and where the rampires rose,
All grim in dust and blood Patroclus stands,
And turns the slaughter on the conqu'ring bands.
First Pronous dy'd beneath his fiery dart,
Which pierc'd below the shield his valiant heart. 485
Thestor was next; who saw the chief appear,
And fell the victim of his coward fear;
Shrunk up he sat, with wild and haggard eye,
Nor stood to combat, nor had force to fly:
Patroclus mark'd him as he shunn'd the war, 490
And with unmanly tremblings shook the car,
And dropp'd the flowing reins. Him 'twixt the jaws
The jav'lin sticks, and from the chariot draws.
As on a rock that over-hangs the main,
An angler, studious of the line and cane, 495
Some mighty fish draws panting to the shore;
Not with less ease the barbed jav'lin bore
The gaping dastard: as the spear was shook,
He fell, and life his heartless breast forsook.

Next on Eryalus he flies; a stone, 500
Large as a rock, was by his fury thrown;
Full on his crown the pond'rous fragment flew,
And burst the helm, and cleft the head in two;
Prone to the ground the breathless warrior fell,
And death involv'd him with the shades of hell. 505
Then low in dust Epaltes, Echiuss, lie;
Ipheas, Evippus, Polymelus, die;
Amphoterus, and Erymas, succeed;
And last Tlepolemus and Pyres bleed.

Where'er he moves, the growing slaughter spread 510
In heaps on heaps; a monument of dead.

When now Sarpedon his brave friends beheld
Gro'ling in dust, and gasping on the field,
With this reproach his flying host he warms,
Oh stain to honour! oh disgrace to arms! 515

Forsake, inglorious, the contended plain!
This hand, unaided, shall the war sustain:
The task be mine, this hero's strength to try,
Who mows whole troops, and makes an army fly.
He spake; and speaking, leapt from off the car, 520
Patroclus lights, and sternly waits the war.

As when two vultures on the mountain's height
Stoop with resounding pinions to the fight;
They cuff, they tear, they raise a screaming cry:
The desert echoes, and the rocks reply: 525
The warriors thus oppos'd in arms, engage
With equal clamours, and with equal rage.

Jove view'd the combat, whose event foreseen,
He thus bespoke his sister and his queen.
The hour draws on; the destinies ordain, 530
My godlike son shall press the Phrygian plain:

Already on the verge of death he stands,
His life is ow'd to fierce Patroclus' hands.
What passions in a parent's breast debate!
Say, shall I snatch him from impending fate, 535
And send him safe to Lycia, distant far
From all the dangers and the toils of war:
Or to his doom my bravest offspring yield,
And fatten with celestial blood the field?

Then thus the goddess with the radiant eyes: 540

What words are these? O sov'reign of the skies!
Short is the date prescrib'd to mortal man;
Shall Jove, for one, extend the narrow span,
Whose bounds were fix'd before his race began? }
How many sons of gods, foredoom'd to death, 545
Before proud Ilion must resign their breath!

Were thine exempt, debate would rise above,
And murmur'ing pow'rs condemn their partial Jove.
Give the bold chief a glorious fate in fight,
And when th' ascending soul has wing'd her flight, 550

Let sleep and death convey, by thy command,
The breathless body to his native land.

His friends and people, to his future praise,

A marble tomb and pyramid shall raise,

And lasting honours to his ashes give ;

555

His fame, 'tis all the dead can have, shall live.

She said ; the cloud-compeller overcome,

Assents to fate, and ratifies the doom.

Then, touch'd with grief, the weeping heav'ns distill'd

A show'r of blood o'er all the fatal field ;

560

The god, his eyes averting from the plain,

Laments his son, predestin'd to be slain,

Far from the Lycian shores, his happy native reign. }

Now met in arms, the combatants appear,

Each heav'd the shield, and pois'd the lifted spear : 565

From strong Patroclus' hand the jav'lin fled,

And pass'd the groin of valiant Thrasydes ;

The nerves unbrac'd, no more his bulk sustain,

He falls, and falling bites the bloody plain.

Two sounding darts the Lycian leader threw ;

570

The first aloof with erring fury flew,

The next transpierc'd Achilles' mortal steed,

The gen'rous Pedasus, of Theban breed ;

Fix'd in the shoulder's joint, he reel'd around,

Roll'd in the bloody dust, and paw'd the slipp'ry ground.

His sudden fall th' entangl'd harness broke :

576

Each axle crackled, and the chariot shook :

When bold Automedon, to disengage

The starting coursers, and restrain their rage,

Divides the traces with his sword, and freed

580

Th' encumber'd chariot from the dying steed :

The rest move on, obedient to the rein ;

The car rolls slowly o'er the dusty plain.

The tow'ring chiefs to fiercer fight advance,

And first Sarpedon whirl'd his weighty lance,

585

Which o'er the warrior's shoulder took its course,

And spent in empty air its dying force.

Not so Patroclus' never-erring dart ;

Aim'd at his breast, it pierc'd the mortal part

Where the strong fibres bind the solid heart.

590 }

Then as the mountain oak, or poplar tall,

Or pine, (fit mast for some great admiral)

Nods to the axe, till with a groaning sound
 It sinks and spreads its honours on the ground:
 Thus fell the king; and, laid on earth supine, 595
 Before his chariot stretch'd his form divine;
 He grasp'd the dust distain'd with streaming gore,
 And, pale in death, lay groaning on the shore.
 So lies a bull beneath the lions paws,
 While the grim savage grinds with foamy jaws 600
 The trembling limbs, and sucks the smoking blood;
 Deep groans, and hollow roars, rebellow thro' the wood.
 Then to the leader of the Lycian band
 The dying chief address his last command.
 Glaucus, be bold; thy task be first to dare 605
 'The glorious dangers of destructive war,
 To lead my troops, to combat at their head,
 Incite the living, and supply the dead.
 Tell them, I charg'd them with my latest breath
 Not unreveng'd to bear Sarpedon's death. 610
 What grief, what shame must Glaucus undergo,
 If these spoil'd arms adorn a Grecian foe?
 Then as a friend, and as a warrior, fight;
 Defend my body, conquer in my right;
 That, taught by great examples, all may try 615
 Like thee to vanquish, or like me to die.
 He ceas'd; the fate suppress'd his lab'ring breath,
 And his eyes darken'd with the shades of death.
 Th' insulting victor with disdain bestrode
 The prostrate prince, and on his bosom trode; 620
 Then drew the weapon from his panting heart,
 The recking fibres clinging to the dart;
 From the wide wound gush'd out a stream of blood,
 And the soul issu'd in the purple flood.
 His flying steeds the Myrmidons detain, 625
 Unguided now their mighty master slain.
 All impotent of aid, transfix'd with grief,
 Unhappy Glaucus heard the dying chief:
 His painful arm, yet useless with the smart
 Inflicted late by Teucer's deadly dart, 630
 Supported on his better hand he staid,
 To Phœbus then ('twas all he could) he pray'd.
 All-seeing monarch! whether Lycia's coast,
 Or sacred Ilion, thy bright presence boast,

Pow'rful alike to ease the wretch's smart ; 635

Oh hear me ! god of ev'ry healing art !

Lo, stiff with clotted blood, and pierc'd with pain,

That thrills my arm, and shoots thro' ev'ry vein ;

I stand unable to sustain the spear,

And sigh at distance from the glorious war. 640

Low in the dust is great Sarpedon laid,

Nor Jove vouchsaf'd his hapless offspring aid,

But thou, O god of health ! thy succour lend,

To guard the reliques of my slaughter'd friend.

For thou, tho' distant, canst restore my might, 645

To head my Lycians, and support the fight.

Apollo heard ; and, suppliant as he stood,

His heav'nly hand restrain'd the flux of blood ;

He drew the dolours from the wounded part,

And breath'd a spirit in his rising heart. 650

Renew'd by art divine, the hero stands,

And owns th' assistance of immortal hands.

First to the fight his native troops he warms,

Then loudly calls on Troy's vindictive arms ;

With ample strides he stalks from place to place ; 655

Now fires Agenor, now Polydamas ;

Æneas next, and Hector he accosts ;

Inflaming thus the rage of all their hosts.

What thoughts, regardless chief thy breast employ ?

Oh too forgetful of the friends of Troy ; 660

Those gen'rous friends, who, from their country far,

Breathe their brave souls out in another's war.

See ! where in dust the great Sarpedon lies,

In action valiant, and in counsel wise.

Who guarded right, and kept his people free ; 665

To all his Lycians lost, and lost to thee !

Stretch'd by Patroclus' arm on yonder plains,

Oh save from hostile rage his lov'd remains :

Ah let not Greece his conquer'd trophies boast,

Nor on his corpse revenge her heroes lost. 670

He spoke : each leader in his grief partook,

Troy, at the loss, thro' all her legions shook.

Transfix'd with deep regret, they view o'erthrown

At once his country's pillar, and their own ;

A chief who led to Troy's beleagu'rd wall 675

A host of heroes, and outshin'd them all.

Fir'd they rush on; first Hector seeks the foes,
And with superior vengeance greatly glows.

But o'er the dead the fierce Patroclus stands
And, rousing Ajax, rous'd the list'ning bands. 680

Heroes, be men! be what you were before:
Or weigh the great occasion, and be more.
The chief who taught our lofty walls to yield,
Lies pale in death, extended on the field.
To guard his body Troy in numbers flies: 685

'Tis half the glory to maintain our prize.
Haste, strip his arms, the slaughter round him spread,
And send the living Lycians to the dead.

The heroes kindle at his fierce command;
The martial squadrons close on either hand: 690
Here Troy and Lycia charge with loud alarms,
Thessalia there, and Greece, oppose their arms.
With horrid shouts they circle round the slain;
'The clash of armour rings o'er all the plain.
Great Jove, to swell the horrors of the fight. 695

O'er the fierce armies pours pernicious night,
And round his son confounds the warring hosts;
His fate ennobling with a crowd of ghosts.

Now Greece gives way, and great Epigeus falls;
Agacelus' son, from Budium's lofty walls: 700

Who, chas'd for murder thence, a suppliant came
To Peleus, and the silver-footed dame;
Now sent to Troy, Achilles' arms to aid,
He pays due vengeance to his kinsman's shade.
Soon as his luckless hand had touch'd the dead, 705
A rock's large fragment thunder'd on his head
Hurl'd by Hectorean force, it cleft in twain
His shatter'd helm, and stretch'd him o'er the slain.

Fierce to the van of fight Patroclus came;
And, like an eagle darting at his game, 710
Sprung on the Trojan and the Lycian band;
What grief thy heart, what fury urg'd thy hand,
Oh gen'rous Greek! when, with full vigour thrown,
At Sthenelaus flew the weighty stone,
Which sunk him to the dead: when 'Troy, too near 715
That arm drew back; and Hector learn'd to fear.

Far as an able hand a lance can throw,
Or at the lists, or at the fighting foe;

So far the Trojans from their lines retir'd ;
 Till Glaucus, turning all the rest inspir'd. 720
 Then Bathyclæus fell beneath his rage,
 The only hope of Chalcon's trembling age :
 Wide o'er the land was stretch'd his large domain,
 With stately seats, and riches, blest in vain :
 Him, bold with youth, and eager to pursue 725
 The flying Lycians, Glaucus met, and slew ;
 Pierc'd thro' the bosom with a sudden wound,
 He fell, and, falling, made the fields resound.
 Th' Achaïans sorrow for their hero slain ;
 With conqu'ring shouts the Trojans shake the plain,
 And croud to spoil the dead ; the Greeks oppose ; 731
 An iron circle round the carcase grows.

Then brave Laogonus resign'd his breath,
 Dispatch'd by Merion to the shades of death :
 On Ida's holy hill he made abode, 735
 The priest of Jovè, and honour'd like his god.
 Between the jaw and ear the jav'lin went ;
 The soul, exhaling, issu'd at the vent.
 His spear Æneas at the victor threw,
 Who stooping forward from the death withdrew ; 740
 The lance hiss'd harmless o'er his cov'ring shield,
 And trembling struck, and routed in the field ;
 There yet scarce spent, it quivers on the plain,
 Sent by the great Æneas' arm in vain.
 Swift as thou art, the raging hero cries, 745
 And skill'd in dancing to dispute the prize,
 My spear the destin'd passage had it found,
 Had fix'd thy active vigour to the ground.

Oh valiant leader of the Dardan host !
 (Insulted Merion thus retorts the boast), 750
 Strong as you are, 'tis mortal force you trust,
 An arm as strong may stretch thee in the dust.
 And if to this my lance thy fate be giv'n,
 Vain are thy vaunts ; success is still from heav'n ;
 This instant sends thee down to Pluto's coast, 755
 Mine is the glory, his thy parting ghost.

O friend, Meneceus' son this answer gave,
 With words to combat, ill befits the brave ;
 Nor empty boasts the sons of Troy repel,
 Your swords must plunge them to the shades of hell.

To speak, beseems the counsel; but to dare 761
In glorious action, is the task of war.

This said, Patroclus to the battle flies;
Great Merion follows, and new shouts arise:
Shields, helmets, rattle, as the warriors close; 765
And thick and heavy sounds the storm of blows.
As thro' the shrilling vale, or mountain ground,
The labours of the woodman's axe resound;
Blows foll'wing blows are heard re-echoing wide,
While crackling forests fall on ev'ry side: 770
Thus echo'd all the fields with loud alarms,
So fell the warriors, and so rung their arms.

Now great Sarpedon, on the sandy shore,
His heav'nly form defac'd with dust and gore,
And stuck with darts by warring heroes shed, 775
Lies undistinguish'd from the vulgar dead.
His long-disputed corse the chiefs inclose,
On ev'ry side the busy combat grows;
Thick, as beneath some shepherd's thatch'd abode,
(The pails high-foaming with a milky flood), 780
The buzzing flies, a persevering train,
Incessant swarm, and chas'd return again.

Jove view'd the combat with a stern survey,
And eyes that flash'd intolerable day;
Fix'd on the field his sight, his breast debates 785
The vengeance due and meditates the fates;
Whether to urge their prompt effect, and call
The force of Hector to Patroclus' fall,
This instant see his short-liv'd trophies won,
And stretch him breathless on his slaughter'd son; 790
Or yet, with many a soul's untimely flight,
Augment the fame and horror of the fight.
To crown Achilles' valiant friend with praise,
At length he dooms; and that his last of days
Shall set in glory; bids him drive the foe; 795
Nor unattended see the shades below.

Then Hector's mind he fills with dire dismay;
He mounts his car, and calls his hosts away.
Sunk with Troy's heavy fates he sees decline
The scales of Jove, and pants with awe divine. 800

Then, nor before, the hardy Lycians fled,
And left their monarch with the common dead;

Around, in heaps on heaps, a dreadful wall
Of carnage rises, as the heroes fall,
(So Jove decreed !) at length the Greeks obtain 805
The prize contested, and despoil the slain.
The radiant arms are by Patroclus borne,
Patroclus' ships the glorious spoils adorn.

Then thus to Phœbus, in the realms above,
Spoke from his throne the cloud-compelling Jove. 810
Descend, my Phœbus ! on the Phrygian plain,
And from the fight convey Sarpedon slain ;
'Then bathe his body in the crystal flood,
With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with blood :
O'er all his limbs ambrosial odours shed, 815
And with celestial robes adorn the dead.

Those rites discharg'd, his sacred corse bequeath
To the soft arms of silent Sleep and Death :
They to his friends the mournful charge shall bear,
His friends a tomb and pyramid shall rear ; 820
What honours mortals after death receive,
Those unavailing honours we may give !

Apollo bows, and from mount Ida's height,
Swift to the field precipitates his flight ;
Thence from the war the breathless hero bore, 825
Veil'd in a cloud, to silver Simois' shore ;
There bath'd his honourable wounds, and drest
His manly members in th' immortal vest ;
And with perfumes of sweet ambrosial dews,
Restores his freshness, and his form renews. 830
Then Sleep and Death, two twins of winged race,
Of matchless swiftness, but of silent pace,
Receiv'd Sarpedon, at the god's command,
And in a moment reach'd the Lycian land ;
The corse amidst his weeping friends they laid, 835
Where endless honours wait the sacred shade.

Meanwhile Patroclus pours along the plains,
With foaming coursers, and with loosen'd reins,
Fierce on the Trojan and the Lycian crew,
Ah blind to fate ! thy headlong fury flew ; 840
Against what fate and pow'rful Jove ordain,
Vain was thy friend's command, thy courage vain.
For he, the god, whose counsels uncontroul'd
Dismay the mighty, and confound the bold ;

The god who gives, resumes, and orders all, 845
He urg'd thee on, and urg'd thee on to fall.

Who first, brave hero ! by that arm was slain,
Who last, beneath thy vengeance press'd the plain :
When heav'n itself thy fatal fury led,
And call'd to fill the number of the dead ? 850

Adrestus first ; Autonous then succeeds ;
Echeclus follows ; next young Megas bleeds ;
Epistor, Menalippus bite the ground ;
The slaughter, Elasmus and Mulus crown'd :
Then sunk Pylartes to eternal night ; 855
The rest, dispersing, trust their fates to flight.

Now 'Troy had stoop'd beneath his matchless pow'r,
But flaming Phœbus kept the sacred tow'r.
'Thrice at the battlements Patroclus strook,
His bazing Ægis thrice Apollo shook ; 860
He try'd the fourth ; when bursting from the cloud,
A more than mortal voice was heard aloud.

Patroclus ! cease ; this heav'n-defended wall
Defies thy lance ! not fated yet to fall :
Thy friend, thy greater far, it shall withstand, 865
Troy shall not stoop ev'n to Achilles' hand.
So spoke the god, who darts celestial fires :
The Greek obeys him, and with awe retires.
While Hector, checking at the Scæan gates
His panting coursers, in his breast debates, 870
Or in the field his forces to employ,
Or draw the troops within the walls of Troy.

Thus while he thought, beside him Phœbus stood,
In Asius' shape, who reign'd by Sangar's flood ;
(Thy brother, Hecuba ! from Dymas sprung, 875
A valiant warrior, haughty, bold, and young).
Thus he accosts him. What a shameful fight ?
Gods ! is it Hector that forbears the sight ?

Were thine my vigour, this successful spear
Should soon convince thee of so false a fear. 880
Turn then, ah turn thee to the field of fame,
And in Patroclus' blood efface thy shame.

Perhaps Apollo shall thy arms succeed,
And heaven ordains him by thy lance to bleed.

So spoke th' inspiring god ; then took his flight,
And plung'd amidst the tumult of the fight. 885

He bids Cebrion drive the rapid car ;
The lash resounds, the coursers rush to war.
The god the Grecians sinking souls deprest,
And pour'd swift spirits thro' each Trojan breast. 890
Patroclus lights, impatient for the fight ;
A spear his left, a stone employs his right :
With all his nerves he drives it at the foe ;
Pointed above, and rough and gross below ;
The falling ruin crush'd Cebrion's head, 895
(The lawless offspring of king Priam's bed,)
His front, brows, eyes, one undistinguish'd wound,
The bursting balls drop sightless to the ground.
The charioteer, while yet he held the rein,
Struck from the car, falls headlong on the plain. 900
To the dark shades the soul unwilling glides,
While the proud victor thus his fall derides.

Good heav'ns ! what active feats yon artist shows,
What skilful divers are our Phrygian foes !
Mark with what ease they sink into the sand ! 905
Pity ! that all their practice is by land.

Then rushing sudden on his prostrate prize,
To spoil the carcass fierce Patroclus flies ;
Swift as a lion, terrible and bold,
That sweeps the fields, depopulates the fold ; 910
Pierc'd thro' the dauntless heart, then tumbles slain ;
And from his fatal courage finds his bane.
At once bold Hector leaping from his car,
Defends the body, and provokes the war.
Thus for some slaughter'd hind, with equal rage, 915
Two lordly rulers of the wood engage ;
Stung with fierce hunger, each the prey invades,
And echoing roars rebellow thro' the shades.
Stern Hector fastens on the warrior's head,
And by the foot Patroclus drags the dead. 920
While all around, confusion, rage, and fright,
Mix the contending hosts in mortal fight.
So, pent by hills, the wild winds roar aloud
In the deep bosom of some gloomy wood ;
Leaves, arms, and trees aloft in air are blown, 925
The broad oaks crackle, and the sylvans groan :
This way and that, the rattling thicket bends,
And the whole forest in one crash descends.

Not with less noise, with less tumultuous rage,
 In dreadful shock the mingled hosts engage, 930
 Darts show'r'd on darts, now round the carcase ring;
 Now flights of arrows bounding from the string :
 Stones follow stones : some clatter on the fields,
 Some, hard and heavy, shake the sounding shields,
 But where the rising whirlwind clouds the plains,
 Sunk in soft dust the mighty chief remains, 935 }
 And, stretch'd in death, forgets the guiding reins ! }

Now flaming from the zenith, Sol had driv'n
 His fervid orb thro' half the vault of heav'n ;
 While on each host with equal tempest fell 940
 The show'ring darts, and numbers sunk to hell.
 But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,
 Glad conquest rested on the Grecian train.
 Then from amidst the tumult and alarms,
 They draw the conquer'd corse, and radiant arms. 945
 Then rash Patroclus with new fury glows,
 And, breathing slaughter, pours amid the foes.
 Thrice on the press like Mars himself he flew,
 And thrice three heroes at each onset slew.
 There ends thy glory ! there the fates untwine 950
 The last black remnant of so bright a line ;
 Apollo dreadful stops thy middle way ;
 Death calls, and heav'n allows no longer day !

For lo ! the god, in dusky clouds enshrin'd,
 Approaching, dealt a stagg'ring blow behind. 955
 The weighty shock his neck and shoulders feel ;
 His eyes flash sparkles, his stunn'd senses reel
 In giddy darkness : far to distance flung,
 His bounding helmet on the champaign rung.
 Achilles' plume is stain'd with dust and gore ; 960
 That plume, which never stoop'd to earth before,
 Long us'd, untouch'd, in fighting fields to shine,
 And shed the temples of the man divine.
 Jove dooms it now on Hector's helm to nod ;
 Not long—for fate pursues him, and the god. 965

His spear in shivers falls : his ample shield
 Drops from his arm : his baldrick strows the field :
 The corslet his astonish'd breast forsakes :
 Loose is each joint : each nerve with horror shakes.

Stupid he stares and all-assistless stands : 970
Such is the force of more than mortal hands !

A Dardan youth there was, well known to fame,
From Panthus sprung, Euphorbus was his name :
Fam'd for the manage of the foaming horse,
Skill'd in the dart, and matchless in the course, 975

Full twenty knights he tumbled from the car,
While yet he learn'd his rudiments of war,
His vent'rous spear first drew the hero's gore :
He struck, he wounded, but he durst no more :

Nor, tho' disarm'd, Patroclus' fury stood : 980 }
But swift withdrew the long-protended wood, }
And turn'd him short, and herded in the croud.

'Thus, by an arm divine, and mortal spear,
Wounded at once, Patroclus yields to fear,
Retires for succour to his social train, 985

And flies the fate, which heav'n decreed, in vain
Stern Hector, as the bleeding chief he views,
Breaks thro' the ranks, and his retreat pursues :

The lance arrests him with a mortal wound ;
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms resound. 990

With him all Greece was sunk ; that moment all
Her yet-surviving heroes seem'd to fall.

So, scorch'd with heat, along the desert shore ;
The roaming lion meets a bristly boar,
Fast by the spring ; they both dispute the flood, 995

With flaming eyes, and jaws besmear'd with blood ;
At length the sov'reign savage wins the strife,

And the torn bore resigns his thirst and life.

Patroclus thus, so many chiefs o'erthrown,
So many lives effus'd, expires his own. 1000

As dying now at Hector's feet he lies,
He sternly views him, and triumphing cries :

Lie there, Patroclus ! and, with thee, the joy
Thy pride once promis'd, of subverting Troy ;
The fancy'd scenes of Ilion wrapt in flames, 1005

And thy soft pleasures serv'd with captive dames !

Unthinking man ! I fought, these tow'rs to free,
And guard that beauteous race from lords like thee ;

But thou a prey to vultures shalt be made :
'Thy own Achilles cannot lend thee aid ; 1010

Tho' much at parting that great chief might say,
 And much enjoin thee, this important day,
 'Return not, my brave friend, (perhaps he said,) }
 'Without the bloody arms of Hector dead.' }
 He spoke, Patroclus march'd, and thus he sped. 1015
 · Supine and wildly gazing on the skies,
 With faint, expiring breath, the chief replies.
 Vain boaster ! cease, and know the pow'rs divine ;
 Jove's and Apollo's is this deed not thine ;
 To heav'n is ow'd whate'er your own you call, 1020
 And heav'n itself disarm'd me ere my fall.
 Had twenty mortals, each thy match in might,
 Oppos'd me fairly, they had sunk in fight :
 By fate and Phœbus was I first o'erthrown :
 Euphorbus next ; the third mean part thy own. 1025
 But thou, imperious ! hear my latest breath ;
 'The gods inspire it, and it sounds thy death.
 Insulting man, thou shalt be soon as I ;
 Black fate hangs o'er thee, and thy hour draws nigh ;
 Ev'n now on life's last verge I see thee stand, 1030
 I see thee fall, and by Achilles' hand.
 He faints ; the soul unwilling wings her way,
 (The beauteous body left a load of clay,)
 Flits to the lone uncomfortable coast ;
 A naked, wand'ring, melancholy ghost ! 1035
 Then Hector pausing, as his eyes he fed
 On the pale carcase, then address the dead.
 From whence this boding speech, the stern decree
 Of death denounc'd, or why denounc'd to me ?
 Why not as well Achilles' fate be giv'n 1040
 To Hector's lance ? Who knows the will of heav'n ?
 Pensive he said ; then pressing as he lay
 His breathless bosom, tore the lance away ;
 And upwards cast the corpse : the reaking spear
 He shakes, and charges the bold charioteer. 1045
 But swift Automeden with loosen'd reins
 Rapt in the chariot o'er the distant plains,
 Far from his rage th' immortal coursers drove ;
 Th' immortal coursers were the gift of Jove.

THE
I L I A D.
BOOK XVII.

The Argument.

The seventh battle, for the body of Patroclus; the acts of Menelaus.

MENELAUS, upon the death of Patroclus, defends his body from the enemy: Euphorbus, who attempts it, is slain. Hector advancing, Menelaus retires; but soon returns with Ajax, and drives him off. This Glaucus objects to Hector as a flight, who thereupon puts on the armour he had won from Patroclus, and renews the battle. The Greeks give way, till Ajax rallies them: Æneas sustains the Trojans. Æneas and Hector attempt the chariot of Achilles, which is borne off by Automedon. The horses of Achilles, deplore the loss of Patroclus: Jupiter covers his body with a thick darkness; the noble prayer of Ajax on that occasion. Menelaus sends Antilochus to Achilles, with the news of Patroclus's death: then returns to the fight, where, though attacked with the utmost fury, he and Meriones, assisted by the Ajaxes, bear off the body to the ships.

The time is the evening of the eight and twentieth day. The scene lies in the fields before Troy.

ON the cold earth divine Patroclus spread,
Lies pierc'd with wounds among the vulgar dead,
Great Menelaus, touch'd with gen'rous woe,
Springs to the front, and guards him from the foe:
Thus round her new-fall'n young the heifer moves, 5
Fruit of her throes, and first born of her loves,

And anxious, (helpless as he lies, and bare,)
Turns, and returns her, with a mother's care,
Oppos'd to each that near the carcase came,
His broad shield glimmers, and his lances flame. 10

The son of Panthus, skill'd the dart to send,
Eyes the dead hero, and insults the friend.
This hand, Atrides, laid Patroclus low ;
Warrior ! desist, nor tempt an equal blow :
To me the spoils my prowess won resign ; 15

Depart with life, and leave the glory mine.
The Trojan thus : the Spartan monarch burn'd
With gen'rous anguish, and in scorn return'd.
Laugh'st thou not, Jove ! from thy superior throne,
When mortals boast of prowess not their own ? 20

Not thus the lion-glories in his might,
Nor panther braves his spotted foe in fight.
Nor thus the boar, (those terrors of the plain ;)
Man only vaunts his force, and vaunts in vain.
But far the vainest of the boastful kind 25

These sons of Panthus vent their haughty mind.
Yet 'twas but late, beneath my conqu'ring steel
This boaster's brother, Hyperenor, fell ;
Against our arm, which rashly he defy'd,
Vain was his vigour, and as vain his pride. 30

These eyes beheld him on the dust expire,
No more to cheer his spouse, or glad his sire.
Presumptuous youth ! like his shall be thy doom,
Go, wait thy brother to the Stygian gloom ;
Or, while thou may'st, avoid the threaten'd fate ; 35

Fools stay to feel it, and are wise too late.
Unmov'd, Euphorbus thus : that action known,
Come for my brother's blood repay thy own.
His weeping father claims thy destin'd head,
And spouse, a widow in her bridal bed. 40

On these thy conquer'd spoils I shall bestow,
To soothe a consort's and a parent's woe.
No longer then defer the glorious strife,
Let heav'n decide our fortune, fame, and life.

Swift as the word the missile lance he flings, 45
The well-aim'd weapon on the buckler rings,
But, blunted by the brass, innoxious falls.
On Jove the father great Atrides calls,

Nor flies the jav'lin from his arm in vain,
 It pierc'd his throat, and bent him to the plain : 50
 Wide thro' the neck appears the grisly wound,
 Prone sinks the warrior, and his arms resound.
 The shining circlets of his golden hair,
 Which ev'n the graces might be proud to wear,
 Instarr'd with gems and gold, bestrow the shore, 55
 With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with gore.

As the young olive, in some sylvan scene,
 Crown'd by fresh fountains with eternal green,
 Lifts the gay head, in snowy flow'rets fair,
 And plays and dances to the gentle air ; 60
 When, lo ! a whirlwind from high heav'n invades
 The tender plant, and withers all its shades :
 It lies up-rooted from its genial bed,
 A lovely ruin, now defac'd and dead.

Thus young, thus beautiful, Euphorbus lay, 65
 While the fierce Spartan tore his arms away.
 Proud of his deed, and glorious in the prize,
 Affrighted Troy the tow'ring victor flies :

Flies, as before some mountain lions ire
 The village curs and trembling swains retire ; 70
 When o'er the slaughter'd bull they hear him roar,
 And see his jaws distil with smoaking gore ;
 All pale with fear, at distance scatter'd round,
 They shout incessant, and the vales resound.

Meanwhile Apollo view'd with envious eyes, 75
 And urg'd great Hector to dispute the prize,
 (In Mentès' shape, beneath whose martial care
 The rough Ciconians learn'd the trade of war,)
 Forbear, he cry'd, with fruitless speed to chace
 Achilles' coursers of ætherial race ; 80

They stoop not, these, to mortal man's command,
 Or stoop to none but great Achilles' hand.
 Too long amus'd with a pursuit so vain,
 Turn, and behold the brave Euphorbus slain !
 By Sparta slain ! for ever now suppress 85
 The fire which burn'd in that undaunted breast !

Thus having spoke, Apollo wing'd his flight,
 And mix'd with mortals in the toils of fight,
 His words infix'd unutterable care
 Deep in great Hector's soul : thro' all the war 90

He darts his anxious eye ; and, instant view'd
 The breathless hero in his blood imbru'd,
 (Forth welling from the wound, as prone he lay,)
 And in the victor's hands the shining prey.
 Sheath'd in bright arms, thro' cleaving ranks he flies, 95
 And sends his voice in thunder to the skies ;
 Fierce as a flood of flame by Vulcan sent,
 It flew, and fir'd the nations as it went.
 Atrides from the voice the storm divin'd,
 And thus explor'd his own unconquer'd mind. 100
 Then shall I quit Patroclus on the plain,
 Slain in my cause, and for my honour slain ?
 Desert the arms, the relics of my friend ?
 Or, singly, Hector and his troops attend ?
 Sure where such partial favour heav'n bestow'd 105
 To brave the hero were to brave the god :
 Forgive me, Greece, if once I quit the field :
 'Tis not to Hector, but to heav'n I yield.
 Yet, nor the god, nor heav'n, should give me fear,
 Did but the voice of Ajax reach my ear : 110
 Still would we turn, still battle on the plains,
 And give Achilles all that yet remains
 Of his and our Patroclus—This no more,
 The time allow'd : Troy thicken'd on the shore,
 A sable scene ! the terrors Hector led. 115
 Slow he recedes, and, sighing quits the dead.
 So from the fold th' unwilling lion parts,
 Forc'd by loud clamours, and a storm of darts ;
 He flies indeed, but threatens as he flies,
 With heart indignant and retorted eyes. 120
 Now enter'd in the Spartan ranks, he turn'd
 His manly breast, and with new fury burn'd,
 O'er all the black battalions sent his view,
 And thro' the cloud the godlike Ajax knew ;
 Where lab'ring on the left the warrior stood, 125
 All grim in arms, and cover'd o'er with blood,
 There breathing courage, where the god of day
 Had sunk each heart with terror and dismay,
 To him the king. Oh Ajax, oh my friend !
 Haste, and Patroclus' lov'd remains defend ; 130
 The body to Achilles to restore,
 Demands our care ; alas, we can no more !

For naked now, despoil'd of arms, he lies ;
And Hector glories in the dazzling prize.
He said, and touch'd his heart. The raging pair 135
Pierce the thick battle, and provoke the war.
Already had stern Hector seiz'd his head,
And doom'd to Trojan dogs th' unhappy dead ;
But soon as Ajax rear'd his tow'r-like shield,
Sprung to his car, and measur'd back the field. 140
His train to Troy the radiant armour bear,
To stand a trophy of his fame in war.

Meanwhile great Ajax his broad shield display'd,
Guards the dead hero with the dreadful shade :
And now before, and now behind, he stood : 145
Thus, in the centre of some gloomy wood,
With many a step the lioness surrounds
Her tawny young, beset by men and hounds ;
Elate her heart, and rousing all her pow'rs,
Dark o'er the fiery balls each hanging eye-brow lowers.
Fast by his side, the gen'rous Spartan glows 151
With great revenge, and feeds his inward woes.

But Glaucus, leader of the Lycian aids,
On Hector frowning, thus his flight upbraids.
Where now in Hector shall we Hector find ? 155
A manly form, without a manly mind.
Is this, O chief ! a hero's boasted fame ?
How vain, without the merit, is the name ?
Since battle is renounc'd, thy thoughts employ
What other methods may preserve thy Troy : 160
'Tis time to try if Ilion's state can stand :
By thee alone, nor ask a foreign hand :
Mean, empty boast ! but shall the Lycians stake
Their lives for you ? those Lycians you forsake ?
What from thy thankless arms can we expect ? 165
Thy friend Sarpedon proves thy base neglect :
Say, shall our slaughter'd bodies guard your walls,
While unreveng'd the great Sarpedon falls ?
Ev'n where he dy'd for Troy, you left him there,
A feast for dogs, and all the fowls of air. 170
On my command if any Lycian wait,
Hence let him march, and give up Troy to fate,
Did such a spirit as the gods impart
Impel one Trojan hand, or Trojan heart,

- (Such, as should burn in ev'ry soul that draws 175
 The sword for glory, and his country's cause),
 Ev'n yet our mutual arms we might employ,
 And drag yon carcase to the walls of Troy.
 Oh! were Patroclus ours, we might obtain
 Sarpedon's arms, and honour'd corse again! 180
 Greece with Achilles' friend should be repaid,
 And thus due honours purchas'd to his shade.
 But words are vain—Let Ajax once appear,
 And Hector trembles and recedes with fear;
 Thou dar'st not meet the terrors of his eye; 185
 And, lo! already thou prepar'st to fly.
 The Trojan chief with fix'd resentment ey'd
 The Lycian leader, and sedate reply'd.
 Say, is it just, my friend, that Hector's ear
 From such a warrior, such a speech should hear? 190
 I deem'd thee once the wisest of thy kind,
 But ill this insult suits a prudent mind.
 I shun great Ajax! I desert my train!
 'Tis mine to prove the rash assertion vain;
 I joy to mingle where the battle bleeds, 195
 And hear the thunder of the sounding steeds.
 But Jove's high will is ever uncontroll'd,
 The strong he withers, and confounds the bold;
 Now crowns with fame the mighty man, and now
 Strikes the fresh garland from the victor's brow: 200
 Come, thro' yon squadrons let us hew the way,
 And thou be witness, if I fear to-day;
 If yet a Greek the sight of Hector dread,
 Or yet their hero dare defend the dead.
 Then, turning to the martial host, he cries, 205
 Ye Trojans, Dardans, Lycians, and allies!
 Be men, my friends, in action as in name,
 And yet be mindful of your ancient fame.
 Hector in proud Achilles' arms shall shine,
 Torn from his friend, by right of conquest mine. 210
 He strode along the field, as thus he said;
 (The sable plumage nodded o'er his head);
 Swift thro' the spacious plain he sent a look,
 One instant saw, one instant overtook.
 The distant band, that on the sandy shore 215
 The radiant spoils to sacred Ilion bore,

There his own mail, unbrac'd, the field bestrow'd;
His train to Troy convey'd the massy load.
Now blazing in th' immortal arms he stands,
The work and present of celestial hands; 220

By aged Peleus to Achilles given,
At first to Peleus by the court of heav'n;
His father's arms not long Achilles wears,
Forbid by fate to reach his father's years.

Him, proud in triumph, glitt'ring from afar, 225
The god, whose thunder rends the troubled air,
Beheld with pity: as apart he sat,
And, conscious, look'd thro' all the scene of fate.
He shook the sacred honours of his head;
Olympus trembled, and the godhead said: 230

Ah, wretched man! unmindful of thy end!
A moment's glory, and what fates attend?
In heav'nly panoply divinely bright
Thou stand'st, and armies tremble at thy sight,
As at Achilles' self! Beneath thy dart 235
Lies slain the great Achilles' dearer part:
Thou from the mighty dead those arms hast torn,
Which once the greatest of mankind had worn.

Yet live! I give thee one illustrious day,
A blaze of glory ere thou fad'st away. 240
For, ah! no more Andromache shall come,
With joyful tears, to welcome Hector home;
No more, officious, with endearing charms,
From thy tir'd limbs unbrace Pelides' arms!

Then with his sable brow he gave the nod, 245
That seals his word; the sanction of the god.
The stubborn arms (by Jove's command dispos'd)
Conform'd spontaneous, and around him clos'd;
Fill'd with the god, enlarg'd his members grew,
Thro' all his veins a sudden vigour flew, 250

The blood in brisker tides began to roll,
And Mars himself came rushing on his soul.
Exhorting loud thro' all the field he strode,
And look'd, and mov'd, Achilles, or a god.
Now Mesthles, Glaucus, Medon he inspires, 255
Now Phorcys, Chromius, and Hippothous fires;

The great Thersilochus like fury found,
 Asteropæus kindled at the sound,
 And Ennomus, in argury renown'd
 Hear, all ye hosts, and hear, unnumber'd bands 260
 Of neighb'ring nations, or of distant lands !
 'Twas not for state we summon'd you so far,
 To boast our numbers, and the pomp of war ;
 Ye came to fight ; a valiant foe to chase,
 To save our present and our future race. 265
 For this, our wealth, our products you enjoy,
 And glean the relics of exhausted Troy.
 Now then to conquer or to die prepare,
 To die or conquer are the terms of war.
 Whatever hands shall win Patroclus slain, 270
 Whoe'er shall drag him to the Trojan train,
 With Hector's self shall equal honours claim ;
 With Hector part the spoil, and share the fame.
 Fir'd by his words, the troops dismiss their fears,
 They join, they thicken, they protend their spears ; 275
 Full on the Greeks they drive in firm array,
 And each from Ajax hopes the glorious prey !
 Vain hope ! what numbers shall the field o'erspread !
 What victims perish round the mighty dead !
 Great Ajax mark'd the growing storm from far, 280
 And thus bespoke his brother of the war.
 Our fatal day, alas ! is come, my friend,
 And all our wars and glories at an end :
 'Tis not this corse alone we guard in vain,
 Condemn'd to vultures on the Trojan plain ; 285
 We two must yield : the same sad fate must fall
 On thee, on me, perhaps, my friend, on all.
 See what a tempest direful Hector spreads,
 And, lo ! it bursts, it thunders on our heads !
 Call on our Greeks, if any hear the call, 290
 The bravest Greeks ; this hour demands them all.
 The warrior rais'd his voice, and wide around
 The field re-echo'd the distressful sound.
 Oh chiefs ! oh princes ! to whose hand is giv'n
 The rule of men ; whose glory is from heav'n ! 295
 Whom with due honours both Atrides grace :
 Ye guides and guardians of our Argive race !

All, whom this well-known voice shall reach from far,
All, whom I see not thro' this cloud of war,
Come all ! let gen'rous rage your arms employ, 300
And save Patroclus from the dogs of 'Troy.

Oilean Ajax first the voice obey'd,
Swift was his pace, and ready was his aid ;
Next him Idomeneus, more slow with age,
And Merion, burning with a hero's rage. 305
The long succeeding numbers who can name ?
But all were Greeks, and eager all for fame.
Fierce to the charge great Hector led the throng ;
Whole 'Troy, embodied, rush'd with shouts along.
Thus, when a mountain-billow foams and raves, 310
Where some swoln river disembogues his waves,
Full in the mouth is stopp'd the rushing tide,
The boiling ocean works from side to side,
The river trembles to its utmost shore,
And distant rocks rebellow to the roar. 315

Nor less resolv'd, the firm Achaian band
With brazen shields in horrid circle stand :
Jove, pouring darkness o'er the mingled fight,
Conceals the warriors shining helms in night ;
To him, the chief for whom the hosts contend, 320
Had liv'd not hateful, for he liv'd a friend :
Dead he protects him with superior care,
Nor dooms his carcase to the birds of air.

The first attack the Grecians scarce sustain,
Repuls'd, they yield ; the Trojans seize the slain : 325
Then fierce they rally, to revenge led on
By the swift rage of Ajax Telamon.
(Ajax to Peleus' son the second name,
In graceful stature next, and next in fame,)
With headlong force the foremost ranks he tore ; 330
So thro' the thicket bursts the mountain-boar,
And rudely scatters, far to distance round,
The frightened hunter and the baying hound.
The son of Lethus, brave Pelasgus' heir,
Hippothous, dragg'd the carcase thro' the war ; 335
The sinewy ancles bor'd, the feet he bound
With thongs, inserted thro' the double wound :
Inevitable fate o'ertakes the deed ;
Doom'd by great Ajax' vengeful lance to bleed ;

It cleft the helmet's brazen cheeks in twain ;
 The shatter'd crest, and horse-hair strow the plain ;
 With nerves relax'd he tumbles to the ground,
 The brain comes gushing from the ghastly wound :
 He drops Patroclus' foot, and o'er him spread
 Now lies, a sad companion of the dead : 345
 Far from Larissa lies, his native air,
 And ill requites his parent's tender care.
 Lamented youth ! in life's first bloom he fell,
 Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.

Once more at Ajax, Hector's jav'lin flies, 350
 The Grecian, marking as it cut the skies,
 Shun'd the descending death ; which hissing on,
 Stretch'd in the dust the great Iphytus' son,
 Schedius the brave, of all the Phocian kind
 The boldest warrior, and the noblest mind : 355
 In little Panope for strength renown'd,
 He held his seat, and rul'd the realms around.
 Plung'd in his throat, the weapon drank his blood,
 And deep transpiercing, thro' the shoulder stood ;
 In clanging arms the hero falls, and all 360
 The fields resounded with his weighty fall.
 Phorcys, as slain Hippothous he defends,
 The Telamonian lance his belly rends ;
 The hollow armour burst before the stroke,
 And thro' the wound the rushing intrails broke, 365
 In strong convulsions panting on the sands
 He lies, and grasps the dust with dying hands.

Struck at the sight recede the Trojan train,
 The shouting Argives strip the heroes slain.
 And now had Troy, by Greece compell'd to yield, 370
 Fled to her ramparts, and resign'd the field ;
 Greece, in her native fortitude elate,
 With Jove averse, had turn'd the scale of fate ;
 But Phœbus urg'd Æneas to the fight,
 He seem'd like aged Periphas to sight : 375
 (A herald in Anchises' love grown old,
 Rever'd for prudence, and with prudence bold.)

Thus he—What methods yet, oh chief ! remain,
 To save your Troy, tho' heav'n its fall ordain ?
 There have been heroes, who, by virtuous care,
 By valour, numbers, and by arts of war,

Have forc'd the pow'rs to spare a sinking state,
And gain'd at length the glorious odds of fate.
But you, when fortune smiles, when Jove declares
His partial favour, and assists your wars, 385
Your shameful efforts 'gainst yourselves employ,
And force th' unwilling god to ruin Troy.

Æneas thro' the form assum'd discries
The pow'r conceal'd, and thus to Hector cries.
Oh lasting shame ! to our own fears a prey, 390
We seek our ramparts, and desert the day.
A god, nor is he less, my bosom warms,
And tells me, Jove asserts the Trojan arms,

He spoke, and foremost to the combat flew,
The bold example all his hosts pursue. 395

Then first, Leocritus beneath him bled,
In vain belov'd by valiant Lycomedes :
Who view'd his fall, and grieving at the chance,
Swift to revenge it, sent his angry lance ;
The whirling lance with vig'rous force address, 400
Descends, and pants in Apisaon's breast :
From rich Pæonia's vales the warrior came,
Next thee, Asteropeus ! in place and fame.

Asteropeus with grief beheld the slain,
And rush'd to combat, but he rush'd in vain : 405

Indissolubly firm, around the dead,
Rank within rank, on buckler buckler spread,
And hem'd with bristled spears, the Grecians stood ;
A brazen bulwark, and an iron wood.

Great Ajax eyes them with incessant care, 410
And in an orb contracts the crowded war,
Close in their ranks commands to fight or fall,

And stands the centre and the soul of all :

Fixt on the spot they war, and wounded, wound,
A sanguine torrent steeps the reeking ground ; 415

On heaps the Greeks, on heaps the Trojans bled,
And thick'ning round them, rise the hills of dead.

Greece in close order, and collected might,
Yet suffers least, and sways the wav'ring fight:

Fierce as conflicting fires, the combat burns, 420
And now it rises, now it sinks by turns.

In one thick darkness all the fight was lost ;
The sun, the moon, and all th' æthereal host

Seem'd as extinct; day ravish'd from their eyes,
 And all heav'n's splendors blotted from the skies. 425
 Such o'er Patroclus' body hung the night,
 The rest in sunshine fought, and open light:
 Unclouded there, the aerial azure spread,
 No vapour rested on the mountain's head,
 The golden sun pour'd forth a stronger ray, 430
 And all the broad expansion flam'd with day.
 Dispers'd around the plain, by fits they fight,
 And here, and there, their scatter'd arrows light:
 But death and darkness o'er the carcase spread,
 There burn'd the war, and there the mighty bled. 435

Meanwhile the sons of Nestor, in the rear,
 Their fellows routed, toss the distant spear,
 And skirmish wide: so Nestor gave command,
 When from the ships he sent the Pylian band.
 The youthful brothers thus for fame contend, 440
 Nor knew the fortune of Achilles' friend;
 In thought they view'd him still, with martial joy,
 Glorious in arms, and dealing deaths to 'Troy.

But round the corse, the heroes pant for breath,
 And thick and heavy grows the work of death; 445
 O'erlabour'd now, with dust, and sweat, and gore,
 Their knees, their legs, their feet are cover'd o'er;
 Drops follow drops, the clouds on clouds arise,
 And carnage clogs their hands, and darkness fills their eyes.
 As when a slaughter'd bull's yet reeking hide, 450
 Strain'd with full force, and tugg'd from side to side,
 The brawny curriers stretch; and labour o'er
 Th' extended surface, drunk with fat and gore;
 So tugging, round the corse both armies stood,
 The mangled body bath'd in sweat and blood; 455
 While Greeks and Ilions equal strength employ,
 Now to the ships to force it now, to 'Troy.
 Not Pallas' self, her breast when fury warms,
 Nor he, whose anger sets the world in arms,
 Could blame this scene; such rage, such horror reign'd;
 Such, Jove to honour the great dead ordain'd. 461

Achilles in his ships at distance lay,
 Nor knew the fatal fortune of the day;
 He, yet unconscious of Patroclus' fall,
 In dust extended under Ilion's wall, 465

Expects him glorious from the conquer'd plain,
And for his wish'd return prepares in vain ;
Tho' well he knew to make proud Ilion bend,
Was more than heav'n had destin'd to his friend,
Perhaps to him : this Thetis had reveal'd ; 470
The rest, in pity to her son, conceal'd.

Still rag'd the conflict round the hero dead,
And heaps on heaps, by mutual wounds they bled.
Curs'd be the man (ev'n private Greeks would say)
Who dares desert this well-disputed day ! 475
First may the cleaving earth before our eyes
Gape wide, and drink our blood for sacrifice !
First perish all, ere haughty Troy shall boast
We lost Patroclus, and our glory lost.

Thus they. While with one voice the Trojans said,
Grant this day, Jove ! or heap us on the dead ! 481
Then clash their sounding arms ; the clangours rise,
And shake the brazen concave of the skies.

Meantime, at distance from the scene of blood,
The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood : 485
Their godlike master slain before their eyes,
They wept, and shar'd in human miseries.
In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,
Now plies the lash, and soothes and threats in vain ;
Nor to the fight, nor Hellespont they go, 490
Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe :
Still as a tomb-stone, never to be mov'd,
On some good man, or woman, unprov'd
Lays its eternal weight ; or fix'd as stands
A marble courser by the sculptor's hands, 495
Plac'd on the hero's grave. Along their face
The big round drops cours'd down with silent pace,
Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late
Circl'd their arch'd necks, and wav'd in state,
'Trail'd on the dust, beneath the yoke were spread, 500
And prone to earth wash'd their languid head ;
Nor Jove disdain'd to cast a pitying look,
While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke.

Unhappy coursers of immortal strain !
Exempt from age, and deathless now in vain ; 505
Did we your race on mortal man bestow,
Only, alas ! to share in mortal woe ?

For ah! what is there, of inferior birth,
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth;
What wretched creature of what wretched kind, 510
Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind?
A miserable race! but cease to mourn:
For not by you shall Priam's son be borne
High on the splendid car: one glorious prize
He rashly boasts; the rest our will denies, 515
Ourself will swiftness to your nerves impart,
Ourself with rising spirits swell your heart.
Automedon your rapid flight shall bear
Safe to the navy thro' the storm of war.
For yet 'tis giv'n to Troy, to ravage o'er 520
The field, and spread her slaughters to the shore;
The sun shall see her conquer, till his fall
With sacred darkness shades the face of all.

He said; and breathing in th' immortal horse
Excessive spirit, urg'd them to the course; 525
From their high manes they shake the dust, and bear
The kindling chariot thro' the parted war:
So flies a vulture thro' the clam'rous train
Of geese, that scream, and scatter round the plain,
From danger now with swiftest speed they flew, 530
And now to conquest with like speed pursue;
Sole in the seat the charioteer remains,
Now plies the jav'lin, now directs the reins:
Him brave Alcimedon beheld distrest,
Approach'd the chariot, and the chief addrest. 535

What god provokes thee, rashly thus to dare,
Alone, unaided, in the thickest war?
Alas! thy friend is slain, and Hector wields
Achilles' arms triumphant in the fields.

In happy time, the charioteer replies, 540
The bold Alcimedon now greets my eyes;
No Greek like him, the heav'nly steeds restrains,
Or holds their fury in suspended reins;
Patroclus, while he liv'd, their rage could tame,
But now Patroclus is an empty name! 545
To thee I yield the seat, to thee resign
The ruling charge: the task of fight be mine.

He said. Alcimedon, with active heat,
Snatches the reins, and vaults into the seat.

His friend descends. The chief of Troy descry'd, 550
And call'd Æneas fighting near his side.
Lo to my sight beyond our hope restor'd,
Achilles' car, deserted of its lord !

The glorious steeds our ready arms invite,
Scarce their weak drivers guide them thro' the fight:
Can such opponents stand, when we assail! 556
Unite thy force, my friend, and we prevail.

The son of Venus to the counsel yields ;
Then o'er their backs they spread their solid shields :
With brass refulgent the broad surface shin'd, 560
And thick bull-hides the spacious concave lin'd.
Then Chromius follows, Aretus succeeds,
Each hopes the conquest of the lofty steeds ;
In vain, brave youths, with glorious hopes ye burn,
In vain advance ! not fated to return. 565

Unmov'd, Automedon attends the fight,
Implores th' Eternal, and collects his might.
Then turning to his friend with dauntless mind :
Oh keep the foaming coursers close behind !
Full on my shoulders let their nostrils blow, 570
For hard the fight, determin'd is the foe ;
'Tis Hector comes ; and when he seeks the prize,
War knows no mean : he wins it, or he dies.

Then thro' the field he sends his voice aloud,
And calls the Ajaces from the warring crowd, 575
With great Atrides. Hither turn, he said,
Turn, where distress demands immediate aid ;
The dead, encircled by his friends, forego,
And save the living from a fiercer foe.
Unhelp'd we stand, unequal to engage 580
The force of Hector, and Æneas' rage:
Yet mighty as they are, my force to prove
Is only mine ; th' event belongs to Jove.

He spoke, and high the sounding jav'lin flung,
Which pass'd the shield of Aretus the young ; 585
It pierc'd his belt, emboss'd with curious art,
Then in the lower belly stuck the dart.
As when a pond'rous axe, descending full,
Cleaves the broad forehead of some brawny bull : 589
Stuck 'twixt the horns, he springs with many a bound,
Then tumbling rolls enormous on the ground :

'Thus fell the youth ; the air his soul receiv'd,
And the spear trembled as his entrails heav'd.

Now at Automedon the Trojan foe
Discharg'd his lance ; the meditated blow, 595
Stooping, he shunn'd ; the jav'lin idly fled,
And hiss'd innoxious o'er the hero's head ;
Deep rooted in the ground, the forceful spear
In long vibrations spent its fury there.

With clashing faulchions now the chiefs had clos'd,
But each brave Ajax heard, and interpos'd ; 601
Nor longer Hector with his Trojan's stood,
But left their slain companion in his blood :
His arms Automedon divests, and cries,
Accept, Patroclus, this mean sacrifice. 605

Thus have I sooth'd my griefs, and thus have paid,
Poor as it is, some off'ring to thy shade.

So looks the lion o'er a mangled boar,
All grin with rage, and horrible with gore ;
High on the chariot at one bound he sprung, 610
And o'er his seat the bloody trophies hung.

And now Minerva, from the realms of air
Descends impetuous, and renews the war ;
For, pleas'd at length the Grecian arms to aid,
'The lord of thunders sent the blue-ey'd maid. 615

As when high Jove, denouncing future woe,
O'er the dark clouds extends his purple bow,
(In sign of tempests from the troubled air,
Or from the rage of man, destructive war,)
The drooping cattle dread th' impending skies, 620
And from his half-till'd field the lab'rer flies.

In such a form the goddess round her drew
A livid cloud, and to the battle flew.
Assuming Phoenix' shape, on earth she falls,
And in his well-known voice to Sparta calls. 625

And lies Achilles' friend, belov'd by all,
A prey to dogs beneath the Trojan wall ?
What shame to Greece for future times to tell :
To thee the greatest, in whose cause he fell !

Oh chief ! oh father ! Atreus' son replies, 630
Oh full of days ! by long experience wise !
What more desires my soul, than here, unmov'd,
'To guard the body of the man I lov'd ?

Ah would Minerva send me strength to rear
This weary'd arm, and ward the storm of war! 635
But Hector, like the rage of fire we dread,
And Jove's own glories blaze around his head.

Pleas'd to be first of all the pow'rs address'd,
She breathes new vigour in her hero's breast,
And fills with keen revenge, with fell despoight, 640
Desire of blood, and rage, and lust of fight,
So burns the vengeful hornet, soul all o'er,
Repuls'd in vain, and thirsty still of gore;
Bold son of Air and Heat, on angry wings
Untam'd, untir'd, he turns, attacks, and stings. 645
Fir'd with like ardour fierce Atreides flew,
And sent his soul with ev'ry lance he threw.

There stood a Trojan, not unknown to fame,
Eetion's son, and Podes was his name;
With riches honour'd, and with courage blest, 650
By Hector lov'd, his comrade, and his guest;
Thro' his broad belt the spear a passage found,
And, pond'rous as he falls, his arms resound.
Sudden at Hector's side Apollo stood,
Like Phænops, Asius' son, appear'd the god; 655
(Asius the great, who held his wealthy reign
In fair Abydos, by the rolling main.)

Oh prince, he cry'd, oh foremost once in fame!
What Grecian now shall tremble at thy name?
Dost thou, at length, to Menelaus yield, 660
A chief once thought no terror of the field;
Yet singly, now, the long disputed prize
He bears victorious, while our army flies.
By the same arm illustrious Podes bled,
The friend of Hector, unreveng'd, is dead! 665
This heard, o'er Hector spreads a cloud of woe,
Rage lifts his lance, and drives him on the foe.

But now th' Eternal shook his sable shield,
That shaded Ide, and all the subject field
Beneath its ample verge. A rolling cloud 670
Involv'd the mount; the thunder roar'd aloud;
Th' affrighted hills from their foundations nod,
And blaze beneath the lightnings of the god:
At one regard of his all-seeing eye,
The vanquish'd triumph, and the victors fly. 675

Then trembled Greece: the flight Penelus led:
 For as the brave Boeotian turn'd his hea
 To face the foe, Polydamas drew near,
 And raz'd his shoulder with a shorten'd spear:
 By Hector wounded, Leitus quits the plain 680
 Pierc'd thro' the wrist! and raging with the pain,
 Grasps his once formidable lance in vain. }

As Hector follow'd, Idomen addrest
 The flaming jav'lin to his manly breast;
 The brittle point before his cors'let yields; 685
 Exulting Troy with clamour fills the fields:
 High on his chariot as the Cretan stood,
 The son of Priam whirl'd the missive wood;
 But, erring from its aim, the impetuous spear
 Struck to the dust the squire and charioteer 690
 Of martial Merion: Cœranus his name,
 Who left fair Lyctus for the fields of fame.
 On foot bold Merion fought; and now laid low,
 Had grac'd the triumphs of his Trojan foe;
 But the brave squire the ready coursers brought, 695
 And with his life his master's safety bought.
 Between his cheek and ear the weapon went,
 The teeth it shatter'd, and the tongue it rent.
 Prone from the seat he tumbles to the plain!
 His dying hand forgets the falling rein: 700
 This Merion reaches, bending from the car,
 And urges to desert the hopeless war;
 Idomeneus consents; the lash applies;
 And the swift chariot to the navy flies.

Nor Ajax less the will of heav'n descry'd, 705
 And conquest shifting to the Trojan side,
 Turn'd by the hand of Jove. Then thus begun,
 To Atreus' seed, the godlike Telamon.

Alas! who sees not Jove's almighty hand
 Transfers the glory to the Trojan band? 710
 Whether the weak or strong discharge the dart,
 He guides each arrow to a Grecian heart:
 Not so our spears: incessant tho' they rain,
 He suffers ev'ry lance to fall in vain.
 Deserted of the god, yet let us try 715
 What human strength and prudence can supply;

If yet this honour'd corse, in triumph borne,
May glad the fleets that hope not our return,
Who tremble yet, scarce rescu'd from their fates,
And still hear Hector thund'ring at their gates. 720
Some hero too must be dispatch'd to bear
The mournful message to Pelides' ear ;
For sure he knows not, distant on the shore,
His friend his lov'd Patroclus, is no more.
But such a chief I spy not thro' the host : 725
The men, the steeds, the armies, are all lost
In gen'ral darkness.—Lord of earth and air !
Oh king ! oh father ! hear my humble pray'r :
Dispel this cloud, the light of heav'n restore ;
Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more : 730
If Greece must perish, we thy will obey ;
But let us perish in the face of day !

With tears the hero spoke, and at his pray'r
The god relenting, clear'd the clouded air ;
Forth burst the sun with all-enlightning ray ; 735
The blaze of armour flash'd against the day.
Now, now, Atrides ! cast around thy sight,
If yet Antilochus survives the fight,
Let him to great Achilles' ear convey
The fatal news.—Atrides hastes away. 740

So turns the lion from the nightly fold,
Tho' high in courage, and with hunger bold,
Long gall'd by herdsmen, and long vex'd by hounds,
Stiff with fatigue, and fretted sore with wounds ;
The darts fly round him from a hundred hands, 745
And the red terrors of the blazing brands :
Till late, reluctant, at the dawn of day
Sour he departs, and quits th' untasted prey.
So mov'd Atrides from his dang'rous place ; 750
With weary limbs, but with unwilling pace ;
The foe, he fear'd, might yet Patroclus gain,
And much admonish'd, much abjur'd his train.

Oh guard these relics to your charge consign'd,
And bear the merits of the dead in mind ;
How skill'd he was in each obliging art ; 755
The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart ;
He was, alas ! but fate decreed his end ;
In death a hero, as in life a friend !

So parts the chief ; from rank to rank he flew,
And round on all sides sent his piercing view. 760
As the bold bird, endu'd with sharpest eye
Of all that wing the mid aerial sky,
The sacred eagle, from his walks above
Looks down, and sees the distant thicket move ;
Then stoops, and sousing on the quiv'ring hair, 765
Snatches his life amid the clouds of air.
Not with less quickness, his exerted sight
Pass'd this, and that way, through the ranks of fight :
Till on the left the chief he sought he found ;
Cheering his men, and spreading deaths around. 770
To him the king. Belov'd of Jove ! draw near,
For sadder tidings never touch'd thy ear ;
'Thy eyes have witness'd what a fatal turn !
How Ilion triumphs, and th' Achaïans mourn.
'This is not all : Patroclus, on the shere 775
Now pale and dead, shall succour Greece no more ;
Fly to the fleet, this instant fly, and tell
'The sad Achilles how his lov'd one fell :
He too may haste the naked corse to gain ;
The arms are Hector's, who despoil'd the slain. 780
The youthful warrior heard with silent woe
From his fair eyes the tears began to flow ;
Big with the mighty grief, he strove to say
What sorrow dictates, but no word found way.
To brave Laodocus his arms he flung, 785
Who near him willing, drove his steeds along ;
Then ran, the mournful message to impart,
With tearful eyes, and with dejected heart.
Swift fled the youth ; nor Menelaus stands,
Though sore distrest, to aid the Pylian bands ; 790
But bids bold Thrasymede those troops sustain ;
Himself returns to his Patroclus slain.
Gone is Antilochus, the hero said,
But hope not, warriors, for Achilles' aid :
'Though fierce his rage, unbounded be his woe, 795
Unarm'd, he fights not with the Trojan foe.
'Tis in our hands alone our hopes remain,
'Tis our own vigour must the dead regain,
And save ourselves, while with impetuous hate
Troy pours along, and this way rolls our fate. 800

'Tis well, said Ajax, be it then my care,
With Merion's aid, the weighty corse to rear;
Myself and my bold brother will sustain
The shock of Hector and his charging train:
Nor fear we armies, fighting side by side; 805
What Troy can dare, we have already try'd.
Have try'd it, and have stood. The hero said.
High from the ground the warriors heave the dead.
A gen'ral clamour rises at the sight;
Loud shout the Trojans, and renew the fight. 810
Not fiercer rush along the gloomy wood,
With rage insatiate, and with thirst of blood,
Voracious hounds, that many a length before
Their furious hunters, drive the wounded boar;
But if the savage turns his glaring eye, 815
They howl aloof, and round the forest fly.
Thus on retreating Greece the Trojans pour,
Wave their thick faulchions, and their jav'lines show'r:
But Ajax turning, to their fears they yield,
All pale they tremble, and forsake the field. 820
While thus aloft the hero's corse they bear,
Behind them rages all the storm of war;
Confusion, tumult, horror, o'er the throng
Of men, steeds, chariots, urg'd the rout along;
Less fierce the winds with rising flames conspire, 825
To whelm some city under waves of fire;
Now sink in gloomy clouds the proud abodes;
Now crack the blazing temples of the gods;
The rumbling torrent thro' the ruin rolls,
And sheets of smoke mount heavy to the poles. 830
The heroes sweat beneath their honour'd load:
As when two mules, along the rugged road,
From the steep mountain with exerted strength
Drag some vast beam, or mast's unwieldy length;
Inly they groan, big drops of sweat distil, 835
Th' enormous timber lab'ring down the hill;
So these.—Behind, the bulk of Ajax stands,
And breaks the torrent of the rushing bands.
Thus when a river, swell'd with sudden rains,
Spreads his broad waters o'er the level plains, 840
Some interposing hill the stream divides,
And breaks its force, and turns the winding tides.

Still close they follow, close the rear engage ;
Æneas storms, and Hector foams with rage :
While Greece a heavy, thick retreat maintains, 845
Wedg'd in one body, like a flight of cranes,
That shriek incessant while the falcon, hung
High on pois'd pinions, threats their callow young.
So from the Trojan chiefs the Grecians fly,
Such the wild terror, and the mingled cry : 850
Within, without the trench, and all the way,
Strow'd in bright heaps, their arms and armour lay :
Such horror Jove imprest ! Yet still proceeds
The work of death, and still the battle bleeds.

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XVIII.

The Argument.

The grief of Achilles, and new armour made him by Vulcan.

THE news of the death of Patroclus is brought to Achilles by Antilochus. Thetis, hearing his lamentations, comes with all her sea-nymphs to comfort him. The speeches of the mother and son on this occasion. Iris appears to Achilles by the command of Juno, and orders him to shew himself at the head of the entrenchments. The sight of him turns the fortune of the day, and the body of Patroclus is carried off by the Greeks. The Trojans call a council, where Hector and Polydamas disagree in their opinions; but the advice of the former prevails, to remain encamped in the field. The grief of Achilles over the body of Patroclus.

Thetis goes to the palace of Vulcan to obtain new arms for her son. The description of the wonderful works of Vulcan; and, lastly, that noble one of the shield of Achilles.

The latter part of the nine and twentieth day, and the eight ensuing, take up this book. The scene is at Achilles's tent on the sea shore, from whence it changes to the palace of Vulcan.

THUS like the rage of fire the combat burns,
And now it rises, now it sinks by turns.
Meanwhile, where Hellespont's broad waters flow,
Stood Nestor's son, the messenger of woe:

There sat Achilles, shaded by his sails, 5
On hoisted yards extended to the gales;
Pensive he sat; for all that fate design'd
Rose in sad prospect to his boding mind.
Thus to his soul he said. Ah! what constrains
The Greeks, late victors now to quit the plains? 10
Is this the day, which heav'n so long ago
Ordain'd to sink me with the weight of woe!
So Thetis warn'd, when by a Trojan hand
The bravest of the Myrmidonian band
Should lose the light? Fulfill'd is that decree; 15
Fall'n is the warrior, and Patroclus he!
In vain I charg'd him soon to quit the plain,
And warn'd to shun Hectorean force in vain!
Thus while he thinks, Antilochus appears,
And tells the melancholy tale with tears. 20
Sad tidings, son of Peleus! thou must hear;
And wretched I, th' unwilling messenger!
Dead is Patroclus! for his corse they fight;
His naked corse; his arms are Hector's right.
A sudden horror shot thro' all the chief, 25
And wrapt his senses in a cloud of grief;
Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread
The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head;
His purple garments, and his golden hairs,
Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears: 30
On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,
And roll'd and grovell'd, as to earth he grew.
The virgin captives, with disorder'd charms,
(Won by his own, or by Patroclus' arms,)
Rush'd from the tents with cries: and gath'ring round,
Beat their white breasts, and fainted on the ground: 36
While Nestor's son sustains a manlier part,
And mourns the warrior with a warrior's heart;
Hangs on his arms, amidst his frantic woe,
And oft prevents the meditated blow. 40
Far in the deep abysses of the main,
With hoary Nereus, and the wat'ry train,
The mother goddess, from her crystal throne,
Heard his loud cries, and answer'd groan for groan.
The circling Nereids with their mistress weep, 45
And all the sea-green sisters from the deep.

Thalia, Glauce, ev'ry wat'ry name,
 Nesæa mild, and silver Spio came ;
 Cymothœ and Cymodoce were nigh,
 And the blue languish of soft Alia's eye. 50
 Their locks Actæa and Limnoria rear,
 Then Proto, Donis, Panope, appear,
 Thoa, Pherusa, Doto, Melita,
 Agave gentle, and Amphithœ gay :
 Next Callianira, Callianassa, show, 55
 Their sister looks ; Dexamene the slow,
 And swift Dynamene, now cut the tides,
 Iæra now the verdant wave divides :
 Nemertes with Apseudes lifts the head,
 Bright Galatea quits her pearly bed, 60
 These Orythia, Clymene, attend,
 Mæra, Amphinome, the train extend,
 And black Janira, and Janassa fair,
 And Amatheia with her amber hair ;
 All these, and all that deep in ocean held 65
 Their sacred seats, the glimm'ring grotto fill'd ;
 Each beat her iv'ry breast with silent woe,
 Till Thetis sorrows thus began to flow.

Hear me, and judge, ye sisters of the main !
 How just a cause has Thetis to complain ? 70
 How wretched, were I mortal, were my fate !
 How more than wretched in th' immortal state !
 Sprung from my bed a godlike hero came,
 The bravest far that ever bore the name ;
 Like some fair olive, by my careful hand 75
 He grew, he flourish'd, and adorn'd the land ;
 To Troy I sent him ; but the fates ordain
 He never, never must return again.
 So short a space the light of heav'n to view,
 So short, alas ! and fill'd with anguish too. 80
 Hear how his sorrows echo thro' the shore !
 I cannot ease them, but I must deplore ;
 I go at least to bear a tender part,
 And mourn my lov'd one with a mother's heart.

She said, and left the caverns of the main, 85
 All bath'd in tears, the melancholy train
 Attend her way. Wide-op'ning part the tides,
 While the long pomp the silver wave divides.

Approaching now, they touch'd the Trojan land ;
Then, two by two, ascended up the strand. 90
Th' immortal mother, standing close beside
Her mournful offspring, to his sighs reply'd ;
Along the coast their mingled clamours ran,
And thus the silver-footed dame began.

Why mourns my son ? thy late preferr'd request 95
The god has granted, and the Greeks distress :
Why mourns my son ? thy anguish let me share,
Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care.

He, deeply groaning—To this cureless grief
Not ev'n the thund'rer's favour brings relief. 100

Patroclus—ah !—Say, goddess, can I boast
A pleasure now ? Revenge itself is lost :
Patroclus, lov'd of all my martial train,
Beyond mankind, beyond myself, is slain !
Lost are those arms the gods themselves bestow'd 105

On Peleus ; Hector bears the glorious load.
Curs'd be that day, when all the pow'rs above
Thy charms submitted to a mortal love :
Oh hadst thou still, a sister of the main,
Pursu'd the pleasures of the wat'ry reign ; 110

And happier Peleus, less ambitious, led
A mortal beauty to his equal bed !

Ere the sad fruit of thy unhappy womb
Had caus'd such sorrows past, and woes to come.
For soon, alas ! that wretched offspring slain, 115
New woes, new sorrows shall create again.

'Tis not in fate th' alternate now to give ;
Patroclus dead, Achilles hates to live.

Let me revenge it on proud Hector's heart,
Let his last spirit smoke upon my dart ; 120
On these conditions will I breathe ; till then,
I blush to walk among the race of men.

A flood of tears, at this, the goddess shed,
Ah then, I see thee dying, see thee dead !
When Hector falls, thou dy'st—Let Hector die, 125
And let me fall ! Achilles made reply.

Far lies Patroclus from his native plain,
He fell, and falling, wish'd my aid in vain.

Ah then, since from this miserable day
I cast all hope of my return away, 130

Since, unreveng'd a hundred ghosts demand
'The fate of Hector from Achilles' hand;
Since here, for brutal courage far renown'd,
I live an idle burden to the ground,
(Others in counsel fam'd for nobler skill, 135
More useful to preserve than I to kill,)
Let me—But oh! ye gracious pow'rs above!
Wrath and revenge from men and gods remove:
Far, far too dear to ev'ry mortal breast,
Sweet to the soul, as honey to the taste; 140
Gath'ring like vapours of a noxious kind
From fiery blood, and dark'ning all the mind.
Me Agamemnon urg'd to deadly hate;
'Tis past—I quell it: I resign to fate.
Yes—I will meet the murd'rer of my friend; 145
Or, if the gods ordain it, meet my end.
The stroke of fate the bravest cannot shun,
The great Alcides, Jove's unequal'd son,
To Juno's hate at length resign'd his breath,
And sunk the victim of all conquer'd death. 150
So shall Achilles fall! stretch'd pale and dead
No more the Grecian hope, or Trojan dread!
Let me, this instant, rush into the fields,
And reap what glory life's short harvest yields.
Shall I not force some widow dame to tear, 155
With frantic hands, her long dishevell'd hair?
Shall I not force her breast to heave with sighs,
And the soft tears to trickle from her eyes?
Yes, I shall give the fair those mournful charms——
In vain you hold me—Hence! my arms, my arms?
Soon shall the sanguine torrent spread so wide, 161
'That all shall know Achilles swells the tide.
My son, (Cœrulean Thetis made reply,
To fate submitting with a secret sigh,)
The host to succour, and thy friend to save, 165
Is worthy thee; the duty of the brave.
But canst thou, naked, issue to the plains?
Thy radiant arms the Trojan foe detains.
Insulting Hector bears the spoils on high,
But vainly glories, for his fate is nigh. 170
Yet, yet a while, thy gen'rous ardour stay,
Assur'd, I meet thee at the dawn of day,

Charg'd with refulgent arms, a glorious load,
Vulcanian arms, the labour of a god.

Then turning to the daughters of the main, 175
The goddess thus dismiss'd her azure train.

Ye sister Nereids? to your deeps descend,
Haste, and our father's sacred seat attend;
I go to find the architect divine,
Where vast Olympus' starry summits shine : 180
So tell our hoary sire—This charge she gave,
The sea-green sisters plunge beneath the wave :
Thetis once more ascends the blest abodes,
And treads the brazen threshold of the gods.

And now the Greeks, from furious Hector's force,
Urg'd to broad Hellespont their headlong course : 185

Nor yet their chiefs. Patroclus body bore
Safe thro' the tempest to the tented shore.
The horse, the foot, with equal fury join'd,
Pour'd on the rear, and thunder'd close behind : 190

And, like a flame thro' fields of ripen'd corn,
The rage of Hector o'er the ranks was borne.
Thrice the slain hero by the foot he drew ;
Thrice to the skies the Trojan clamours flew : 195

As oft th' Ajaces his assault sustain;
But check'd, he turns; repuls'd attacks again.
With fiercer shouts his ling'ring troops he fires,
Nor yields a step, nor from his post retires :
So watchful shepherds strive to force, in vain,
The hungry lion from a carcase slain. 200

Ev'n yet Patroclus had he borne away,
And all the glories of the extended day,
Had not high Juno, from the realms of air,
Secret, dispatch'd her trusty messenger.
The various goddess of the show'ry bow, 205
Shot in a whirlwind to the share below,
To great Achilles at his ships she came,
And thus began the many-colour'd dame.

Rise, son of Peleus ! rise, divinely brave !
Assist the combat, and Patroclus save : 210
For him the slaughter to the fleet they spread,
And fall by mutual wounds around the dead.
To drag him back to Troy the foe contends,
Nor with his death the rage of Hector ends :

A prey to dogs he dooms the corse to lie, 215
And marks the place to fix his head on high.
Rise, and prevent, if yet you think of fame,
Thy friend's disgrace, thy own eternal shame?
Who sends thee, goddess! from th' ætherial skies?
Achilles thus. And Iris thus replies, 220
I come, Pelides! from the queen of Jove,
Th' immortal empress of the realms above.
Unknown to him who sits remote on high
Unknown to all the synod of the sky.
Thou com'st in vain, he cries, with fury warm'd; 225
Arms I have none, and can I fight unarm'd?
Unwilling as I am, of force I stay,
Till Thetis bring me at the dawn of day,
Vulcanian arms; what other can I wield?
Except the mighty Telamonian shield? 230
That, in my friend's defence, has Ajax spread,
While his strong lance around him heaps the dead:
The gallant chief defends Menœtius' son,
And does what his Achilles should have done.
Thy want of arms, said Iris, well we know; 235
But tho' unarm'd, yet clad in terrors, go!
Let but Achilles o'er yon trench appear,
Proud Troy shall tremble, and consent to fear:
Greece from one glance of that tremendous eye,
Shall take new courage, and disdain to fly. 240
She spoke, and past in air. The hero rose;
Her Ægis, Pallas o'er his shoulder throws;
Around his brows a golden cloud she spread,
A stream of glory flam'd above his head.
As when from some beleaguer'd town arise 245
The smokes high curling to the shaded skies;
(Seen from some island, o'er the main afar,
When men, distress, hang out the sign of war;)
Soon as the sun in ocean hides his rays,
Thick on the hills the flaming beacons blaze: 250
With long projected beams the seas are bright,
And heav'n's high arch reflects the ruddy light:
So from Achilles' head the splendours rise,
Reflecting blaze on blaze against the skies.
Forth march'd the chief, and, distant from the croud,
High on the rampart rais'd his voice aloud; 256

With her own shout Minerva swells the sound,
 Troy starts astonish'd, and the shores rebound.
 As the loud trumpet's brazen mouth, from far,
 With shrilling clangour, sounds th' alarm of war, 260
 Struck from the walls, the echoes float on high,
 And the round bulwarks and thick tow'rs reply ;
 So high his brazen voice the hero rear'd,
 Hosts drop their arms, and trembled as they heard ;
 And back their chariots roll, and coursers bound, 265
 And steeds and men lie mingled on the ground.
 Aghast they see the living lightnings play,
 And turn their eye-balls from the flashing ray.
 Thrice from the trench his dreadful voice he rais'd ;
 And thrice they fled, confounded and amaz'd. 270
 Twelve in the tumult wedg'd, untimely rush'd
 On their own spears, by their own chariots crush'd :
 While, shielded from the darts, the Greeks obtain
 The long contended carcase of the slain.
 A lofty bier the breathless warrior bears : 275
 Around his sad companions melt in tears.
 But chief Achilles, bending down his head,
 Pours unavailing sorrows o'er the dead,
 Whom late triumphant, with his steeds and car,
 He sent refulgent to the field of war ; 280
 Unhappy change ! now senseless, pale he found,
 Stretch'd forth, and gnash'd with many a gaping wound.
 Meantime, unwear'd with his heav'nly way,
 In Ocean's waves the unwilling light of day
 Quench'd his red orb, at Juno's high command, 285
 And from their labours eas'd the Achaian band,
 The frightened Trojans, (panting from the war,
 Their steeds unharness'd from the weary car,)
 A sudden council call'd ; each chief appear'd,
 In haste, and standing, for to sit they fear'd. 290
 'Twas now no season for prolong'd debate ;
 They saw Achilles, and in him their fate.
 Silent they stood : Polydamas, at last,
 Skill'd to discern the future by the past,
 The son of Panthus, thus express'd his fears : 295
 ('The friend of Hector, and of equal years :
 The self same night to both a being gave,
 One wise in counsel, one in action brave.)

In free debate, my friends, your sentence speak,
For me, I move, before the morning break, 300
To raise our camp; too dang'rous here our post,
Far from Troy's walls, and on a naked coast.
I deem'd not Greece so dreadful, while engag'd
In mutual feuds, her king and hero rag'd;
Then, while we hop'd our armies might prevail, 305
We boldly camp'd beside a thousand sail.
I dread Pelides now: his rage of mind
Not long continues to the shores confin'd,
Nor to the fields, where long in equal fray
Contending nations won and lost the day; 310
For Troy, for Troy, shall henceforth be the strife,
And the hard contest not for fame, but life.
Haste then to Ilion, while the fav'ring night
Detains those terrors, keeps that arm from fight;
If but the morrow's sun behold us here, 315
That arm, those terrors, we shall feel, not fear;
And hearts that now disdain, shall leap with joy,
If heav'n permits them then to enter Troy.
Let not my fatal prophecy be true,
Nor what I tremble but to think, ensue. 320
Whatever be our fate, yet let us try
What force of thought and reason can supply;
Let us on counsel for our guard depend,
The town, her gates and bulwarks shall defend.
When morning dawns, our well appointed pow'rs, 325
Array'd in arms, shall line the lofty tow'rs.
Let the fierce hero then, when fury calls,
Vent his made vengeance on our rocky walls,
Or fetch a thousand circles round the plain,
Till his spent coursers seek the fleet again: 330
So may his rage be tir'd and labour'd down,
And dogs shall tear him ere he sack the town.
Return! said Hector, (fir'd with stern disdain;)
What! coop whole armies in our walls again?
Was't not enough, ye valiant warriors say, 335
Nine years imprison'd in those tow'rs ye lay?
Wide o'er the world was Ilion fam'd of old,
For brass exhaustless, and for mines of gold:
But while inglorious in her walls we stay'd,
Sunk were her treasures, and her stores decay'd: 340

The Phrygian now her scatter'd spoils enjoy,
And proud Mæonia wastes the fruits of Troy.
Great Jove at length in arms to conquest calls,
And shuts the Grecians in their wooden walls :
Dar'st thou dispirit whom the gods incite ? 345
Flies any Trojan ? I shall stop his flight.
To better counsel then attention lend ;
Take due refreshment, and the watch attend.
If there be one whose riches cost him care,
Forth let him bring them for the troops to share ; 350
'Tis better gen'rously bestow'd on those,
Than left the plunder of our country's foes.
Soon as the morn the purple orient warms,
Fierce on yon navy will we pour our arms.
If great Achilles rise in all his might, 355
His be the danger : I shall stand the fight.
Honour ye gods ! or let me gain or give,
And live he glorious, whoso'er shall live !
Mars is our common lord, alike to all ;
And of the victor triumphs but to fall. 360
The shouting host in loud applauses join'd,
So Pallas robb'd the many of their mind,
To their own sense condemn'd ! and left to chuse
The worst advice, the better to refuse.
While the long night extends her sable reign, 365
Around Patroclus mourn'd the Grecian train,
Stern in superior grief Pelides stood ;
Those slaught'ring arms, so us'd to bathe in blood,
Now clasp his clay-cold limbs : then gushing start
The tears, and sighs burst from his swelling heart. 370
The lion thus, with dreadful anguish stung,
Roars thro' the desert, and demands his young :
When the grim savage to his rifled den
Too late returning, snuffs the tract of men,
And o'er the vales and o'er the forest bounds, 375
His clam'rous grief the bellowing wood resounds.
So grieves Achilles ; and, impetuous, vents,
To all his Myrmidons, his loud laments.
In what vain promise, gods ? did I engage ?
When to console Menœtius' feeble age, 380
I vow'd his much-lov'd offspring to restore,
Charg'd with rich spoils to fair Opuntia's shore !

But mighty Jove cuts short, with just disdain,
The long, long views of poor designing man!
One fate the warrior and the friend shall strike, 385
And Troy's black sands must drink our blood alike;
Me too a wretched mother shall deplore,
An aged father never see me more!
Yet, my Patroclus! yet a space I stay,
Then swift pursue thee on the darksome way 390
Ere thy dear relics in the grave are laid.
Shall Hector's head be offer'd to thy shade;
That, with his arms, shall hang before thy shrine;
And twelve the noblest of the Trojan line,
Sacred to vengeance, by his hand expire; 395
Their lives effus'd around thy flaming pyre.
Thus let me ly till then! thus, closely prest,
Bathe thy cold face, and sob upon thy breast!
While Trojan captives here thy mourners stay,
Weep all the night, and murmur all the day: 400
Spoils of my arms, and thine, when, wasting wide,
Our swords kept time, and conquer'd side by side.

He spoke, and bid the sad attendants round,
Cleanse the pale corse, and wash each honour'd wound.
A massy cauldron of stupendous frame 405
'They brought, and plac'd it o'er the rising flame;
Then heap'd the lighted wood; the flame divides
Beneath the vase, and climbs around the sides:
In its wide womb they pour the rushing stream;
The boiling water bubbles to the brim. 410
The body then they bathe with pious toil,
Embalm the wounds, anoint the limbs with oil,
High on a bed of state extended laid,
And decent cover'd with a linen shade;
Last o'er the dead the milk-white veil they threw; 415
That done, their sorrows and their sighs renew.

Meanwhile to Juno, in the realms above,
His wife and sister, spoke almighty Jove,
At last thy will prevails, great Peleus' son
Rises in arms: such grace thy Greeks have won. 420
Say, for I know not, is their race divine,
And thou the mother of that martial line?

What words are these, (th' imperial dame replies,
While anger flash'd from her majestic eyes);

Succour like this a mortal arm might lend, 425
And such success mere human wit attend:
And shall not I, the second pow'r above,
Heav'n's queen, and consort of the thund'ring Jove;
Say, shall not I one nations fate command,
Not wreak my vengeance on one guilty land? 430
So they. Meanwhile, the silver-footed dame
Reach'd the Vulcanian dome, eternal frame!
High eminent amid the works divine,
Where heav'n's far-beaming brazen mansions shine.
There the lame architect the goddess found, 435
Obscure in smoke, his forges flaming round,
While bath'd in sweat from fire to fire he flew,
And puffing loud, the roaring bellows blew.
That day no common task his labour claim'd;
Full twenty tripods for his hall he fram'd, 440
That plac'd on living wheels of massy gold,
Wond'rous to tell, instinct with spirit roll'd
From place to place, around the blest abodes,
Self mov'd, obedient to the beck of gods:
For their fair handles now, o'erwrought with flow'rs, 445
In moulds prepar'd, the glowing ore he pours.
Just as responsive to his thought the frame
Stood prompt to move, the azure goddess came:
Charis, his spouse, a grace divinely fair,
(With purple fillers round her braided hair), 450
Observ'd her ent'ring: her soft hand she press'd,
And, smiling, thus the wat'ry queen address'd.
What, goddess! this unusual favour draws;
All hail, and welcome! whatsoe'er the cause:
Till now a stranger, in a happy hour, 455
Approach, and taste the dainties of the bow'r.
High on a throne, with stars of silver grac'd
And various artifice, the queen she plac'd;
A footstool at her feet: then calling, said,
Vulcan, draw near, 'tis Thetis asks your aid. 460
'Thetis, reply'd the god, our pow'rs may claim,
An ever-dear, an ever-honour'd name!
When my proud mother hurl'd me from the sky,
(My aukward form, it seems, displeas'd her eye),
She, and Eurynome, my griefs redrest, 465
And soft receiv'd me on their silver breast.

Ev'n then, these arts employ'd my infant thought ;
 Chains, bracelets, pendants, all their toys I wrought.
 Nine years kept secret in the dark abode,
 Secure I lay conceal'd from man and god ; 470
 Deep in a cavern'd rock my days were led ;
 The rushing ocean murmur'd o'er my head.
 Now, since her presence glads our mansion, say,
 For such desert what service can I pay ?
 Vouchsafe, O Thetis ! at our board to share 475
 The genial rites, and hospitable fare ;
 While I my labours of the forge forego,
 And bid the roaring bellows cease to blow.
 Then from his anvil the lame artist rose ;
 Wide with distorted legs oblique he goes, 480
 And stills the bellows, and in order laid,
 Locks in their chests his instruments of trade.
 Than with a sponge the sooty workman drest
 His brawny arms, embrown'd, and hairy breast.
 With his huge sceptre grac'd, and red attire, 485
 Came halting forth the sov'reign of the fire ;
 The monarch's steps two female forms uphold,
 That mov'd and breath'd, in animated gold :
 To whom was voice, and sense, and sciencce giv'n
 Of works divine, (such wonders are in heav'n) ! 490
 On these supported, with unequal gait,
 He reach'd the throne where pensive Thetis sat ;
 There plac'd beside her on the shining frame,
 He thus address'd the silver footed dame.
 Thee, welcome goddess ! what occasion calls, 495
 So long a stranger to these honour'd walls ?
 'Tis thine, fair Thetis, the command to lay,
 And Vulcan's joy and duty to obey,
 To whom the mournful mother thus replies,
 (The crystal drops stood trembling in her eyes), 500
 O Vulcan ! say, was ever breast divine
 So pierc'd with sorrows, so o'erwhelm'd as mine ?
 Of all the goddesses, did Jove prepare
 For Thetis only such a weight of care ?
 I, only I, of all the wat'ry race, 505
 By force subjected to a man's embrace,
 Who, sinking now with age and sorrow, pays
 The mighty fine impos'd on length of days.

Sprung from my bed, a godlike hero came,
The bravest sure that ever bore the name ; 510
Like some fair plant beneath my careful hand
He grew, he flourish'd, and he grac'd the land :
To Troy I sent him, but his native shore,
Never, ah never, shall receive him more ;
(Ev'n while he lives, he wastes with sacred woe) ; 515
Nor I, a goddess, can retard the blow !
Robb'd of the prize, the Grecian suffrage gave,
The king of nations forc'd his royal slave :
For this he griev'd ; and till the Greeks, oppress,
Requir'd his arm, he sorrow'd unredrest. 520
Large gifts they promise, and their elders send ;
In vain—He arms not but permits his friend
His arms, his steeds, his forces, to employ ;
He marches, combats, almost conquers Troy :
Then slain by Phœbus, Hector had the name, 525
At once resigns his armour, life, and fame.
But thou, in pity, by my pray'r be won :
Grace with immortal arms this short-liv'd son,
And to the field in martial pomp restore,
To shine with glory, till he shines no more ! 530
To her the artist-god. Thy griefs resign,
Secure, what Vulcan can, is ever thine.
O could I hide him from the fates as well,
Or with these hands the cruel stroke repel,
As I shall forge most envy'd arms, the gaze 535
Of wond'ring ages, and the world's amaze !
Thus having said, the father of the fires
'To the black labour of his forge retires.
Soon as he bade them blow, the bellows turn'd
Their iron mouths ; and, where the furnace burn'd, 540
Resounding breath'd : at once the blast expires,
And twenty forges catch at once the fires ;
Just as the God directs, now loud, now low,
They raise a tempest, or they gently blow.
In hissing flames huge silver bars are roll'd, 545
And stubborn brass, and tin, and solid gold :
Before, deep fix'd, th' eternal anvils stand ;
The pond'rous hammer loads his better hand,
His left with tongs turns the vex'd metal round,
And thick strong strokes the doubling vaults rebound. 550

Then first he form'd th' immense and solid shield;
Rich, various artifice emblaz'd the field;
Its outmost verge a threefold circle bound;
A silver chain suspends the massy round.
Five ample plates the broad expanse compose, 555
And godlike labours on the surface rose.
There shone the image of the master mind:
There earth, there heav'n, there ocean he design'd;
Th' unwearied sun, the moon completely round;
The starry lights that heav'n's high convex crown'd;
The Pleiads, Hyads, with the northern team; 561
And great Orion's more refulgent beam;
To which, around the axle of the sky,
The Bear revolving, points his golden eye,
Still shines exalted on th' ætherial plain, 565
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.

Two cities radiant on the shield appear,
The image one of peace, and one of war;
Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight,
And solemn dance, and Hymeneal rite; 570
Along the street the new-made brides are led,
With torches flaming to the nuptial bed;
The youthful dancers in a circle bound
To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound:
Thro' the fair streets, the matrons in a row, 575
Stand in their porches, and enjoy the show.

There, in the forum swarm a num'rous train,
The subject of debate, a townsman slain;
One pleads the fine discharg'd, which one deny'd,
And bade the public and the laws decide; 580
The witness is produc'd on either hand;
For this, or that, the partial people stand:
The appointed heralds still the noisy bands,
And form a ring, with sceptres in their hands;
On seats of stone, within the sacred place, 585
The rev'rend elders nodded o'er the case;
Alternate, each th' attesting sceptre took,
And, rising solemn, each his sentence spoke.
Two golden talents lay amidst, in sight,
The prize of him who best adjudg'd the right. 590

Another part, a prospect differing far,
Glow'd with refulgent arms, and horrid war.

Two mighty hosts a leaguer'd town embrace,
And one would pillage, one would burn the place.
Meantime the townsmen, arm'd with silent care, 595
A secret ambush on the foe prepare :
Their wives, their children, and the watchful band
Of trembling parents, on the turrets stand.
They march ; by Pallas and by Mars made bold :
Gold were the gods, their radiant garments gold, 600
And gold their armour ; these the squadron led,
August, divine, superior by the head !
A place for ambush fit, they found, and stood,
Cover'd with shields, beside a silver flood.
Two spies at distance lurk, and watchful seem 605
If sheep or oxen seek the winding stream.
Soon the white flocks proceeded o'er the plains,
And steers slow-moving ; and two shepherd swains,
Behind them, piping on their reeds, they go,
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe. 610
In arms the glitt'ring squadron rising round,
Rush sudden : hills of slaughter heap the ground,
Whole flocks and herds, ly bleeding on the plains,
And all, amidst them, dead, the shepherd swains !
The bellowing oxen the besiegers hear ; 615
They rise, take horse, approach, and meet the war ;
They fight, they fall, beside the silver flood ;
The waving silver seem'd to blush with blood.
There Tumult, there Contention, stood confest ;
One rear'd a dagger at a captive's breast, 620
One held a living foe, that freshly bled
With new made wounds ; another dragg'd a dead ;
Now here, now there, the carcasses they tore :
Fate stalk'd amidst them, grim with human gore.
And the whole war came out, and met the eye ; 625
And each bold figure seem'd to live, or die.
A field deep furrow'd, next the god design'd,
The third time labour'd by the sweating hind ;
The shining shares full many plowmen guide,
And turn their crooked yokes on ev'ry side. 630
Still as at either end they wheel around,
The master meets them with his goblet crown'd :
The hearty draught rewards, renews their toil,
Then back the turning plough-shares cleave the soil :

Behind, the rising earth in ridges roll'd,
And sable look'd, tho' form'd of molten gold. 635

Another field rose high with waving grain;
With bended sickles stand the reaper-train:
Here, stretch'd in ranks, the levell'd swarths are found,
Sheaves heap'd on sheaves, here thicken up the ground.
With sweeping stroke the mowers strow the lands; 641
The gath'ers follow, and collect in bands;
And last the children, in whose arms are borne
(Too short to grip them) the brown sheaves of corn,
The rustic monarch of the field describes, 645
With silent glee, the heaps around him rise.
A ready banquet on the turf is laid,
Beneath an ample oak's expanded shade.

The victim-ox the sturdy youths prepare;
The reaper's due repast, the womens care. 650

Next, ripe in yellow gold, a vineyard shines,
Bent with the pond'rous harvest of its vines;
A deeper dye the dangling clusters show,
And, curl'd on silver props, in order glow;
A darker metal mixt intrench'd the place; 655
And pales of glitt'ring tin th' inclosure grace.

To this, one path-way gently winding leads,
Where march a train with baskets on their heads,
(Fair maids, and blooming youths,) that smiling bear
The purple product of the autumnal year. 660

To these a youth awakes the warbling strings,
Whose tender lay the fate of Linus sings;
In measur'd dance behind him move the train,
Tune soft the voice, and answer to the strain.

Here, herds of oxen march, erect and bold, 665
Rear high their horns, and seem to lowe in gold,
And speed to meadows on whose sounding shores
A rapid torrent thro' the rushes roars:

Four golden herdsmen as their guardian stand,
And nine sour dogs complete the rustic band. 670

Two lions rushing from the wood appear'd,
And seiz'd a bull the master of the herd;
He roar'd: in vain the dogs, the men withstood,
They tore his flesh, and drank the sable blood.

The dogs, oft chear'd in vain, desert the prey, 675
Dread the grim terrors, and at distance bay.

Next this, the eye the art of Vulcan leads
Deep thro' fair forests, and a length of meads :
And stalls, and folds, and scatter'd cots between ;
And fleecy flocks, that whiten all the scene. 680

A figur'd dance succeeds ; such once was seen
In lofty Gnosus, for the Cretan queen,
Form'd by Dædalean art. A comely band
Of youth and maidens, bounding hand in hand ;
The maids in soft cymars of linen drest : 685
The youths all graceful in a glossy vest ;
Of those the locks with flow'ry wreaths inroll'd,
Of these the sides adorn'd with swords of gold.
That, glitt'ring gay, from silver belts depend.

Now all at once they rise, at once descend, 690
With well-taught feet : now shape, in oblique ways,
Confus'dly regular, the moving maze :
Now forth at once, too swift for fight they spring,
And undistinguish'd blend the flying ring :

So whirls a wheel, in giddy circle tost, 695
And, rapid as it runs, the single spokes are lost :
The gazing multitudes admire around ;
Two active tumblers in the centre bound ;
Now high, now low, their pliant limbs they bend,
And gen'ral songs the sprightly revel end. 700

Thus the broad shield complete the artist crown'd
With his last hand, and pour'd the ocean round :
In living silver seem'd the waves to roll,
And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole.

This done, whate'er a warrior's use requires 705
He forg'd ; the cuirass that out shone the fires,
The greaves of ductile tin, the helm imprest
With various sculpture, and the golden crest ;
At Thetis feet the finish'd labour lay ;
She, as a falcon, cuts th' aerial way ; 710
Swift from Olympus' snowy summit flies,
And bears the blazing present thro' the skies.

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XIX.

The Argument.

The reconciliation of Achilles and Agamemnon.

THETIS brings to her son the armour made by Vulcan. She preserves the body of his friend from corruption, and commands him to assemble the army, to declare his resentment at an end. Agamemnon and Achilles are solemnly reconciled: The speeches, presents, and ceremonies on that occasion. Achilles is with great difficulty persuaded to refrain from the battle till the troops have refreshed themselves, by the advice of Ulysses. The presents are convey'd to the tent of Achilles; where Briseis laments over the body of Patroclus. The hero obstinately refuses all repast, and gives himself up to lamentations for his friend. Minerva descends to strengthen him, by the order of Jupiter. He arms for the fight: his appearance described. He addresses himself to his horses, and reproaches them with the death of Patroclus. One of them is miraculously endued with voice, and inspired to prophecy his fate; but the hero, not astonish'd by that prodigy, rushes with fury to the combat,

The thirtieth day. The scene is on the sea-shore.

SOON as Aurora heav'd her orient head
Above the waves, that blush'd with early red,
(With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light,)

Th' immortal arms the goddess-mother bears
 Swift to her son : her son she finds in tears
 Stretch'd o'er Patroclus' corse ; while all the rest
 Their sov'reign's sorrows in their own exprest
 A ray divine her heav'nly presence shed,
 And thus, his hand soft touching, Thetis said. 10

Suppress (my son) this rage of grief, and know
 It was not man, but heav'n, that gave the blow ;
 Behold what arms by Vulcan are bestow'd ;
 Arms worthy thee, or fit to grace a god.

Then drops the radiant burden to the ground ; 15
 Clang the strong arms, and ring the shores around :
 Back shrink the Myrmidons with dread surprise,
 And from the broad effulgence turn their eyes.
 Unmov'd the hero, kindles at the show,
 And feels with rage divine his bosom glow ; 20
 From his fierce eye-balls living flames expire,
 And flash incessant like a stream of fire :
 He turns the radiant gift, and feeds his mind
 On all the immortal artist had design'd.

Goddess, (he cry'd,) these glorious arms that shine 25
 Wit hmatchless art, confess the hand divine.
 Now to the bloody battle let me bend :
 But, ah ! the relic of my slaughter'd friend !
 In those wide wounds thro' which his spirit fled,
 Shall flies, and worms obscene, pollute the dead. 30

That unavailing care be laid aside,
 (The azure goddess to her son reply'd,)
 Whole years untouch'd, uninjur'd shall remain,
 Fresh as in life, the carcase of the slain.
 But go, Achilles, (as affairs require,) 35
 Before the Grecian peers renounce thine ire :
 Then uncontroul'd in boundless war engage,
 And heav'n with strength supply the mighty rage !

Then in the nostrils of the slain she pour'd
 Nectarous drops, and rich ambrosia shower'd 40
 O'er all the corse. The flies forbid their prey,
 Untouch'd it rests, and sacred from decay.
 Achilles to the strand obedient went :
 The shores resounded with the voice he sent.
 The heroes heard, and all the naval train 45
 That tend the ships, or guide them o'er the main,

Alarm'd, transported at the well-known sound,
Frequent and full, the great assembly crown'd ;
Studious to see that terror of the plain,
Long lost to battle, shine in arms again, 50
Tydides and Ulysses first appear,
Lame with their wounds, and leaning on the spear ;
These on the sacred seats of council plac'd,
The king of men Atrides, came the last :
He too sore wounded by Agenor's son. 55
Achilles (rising in the midst) begun.

O monarch ! better far had been the fate
Of thee, of me, of all the Grecian state,
If (ere the day when by mad passion sway'd,
Rash we contended for the black ey'd-maid) 60
Preventing Dian had dispatch'd her dart,
And shot the shining mischief to the heart !
Then many a hero had not press'd the shore,
Nor Troy's glad fields been fatten'd with our gore.
Long, long, shall Greece the woes we caus'd bewail, 65
And sad posterity repeat the tale,
But this, no more the subject of debate,
Is past, forgotten, and resign'd to fate :
Why should (alas) a mortal man, as I,
Burn with a fury that can never die ? 70
Here then my anger ends: let war succeed,
And ev'n as Greece has bled, let Ilion bleed.
Now call the hosts, and try, if, in our sight,
'Troy yet shall dare to camp a second night ?
I deem their mightiest, when this arm he knows 75
Shall 'scape with transport, and with joy repose,

He said ; his finish'd wrath with loud acclaim
The Greeks accept and shout Pelides' name.
When thus, not rising from his lofty throne,
In state unmov'd, the king of men begun. 80

Hear me, ye sons of Greece ! with silence hear !
And grant your monarch an impartial ear ;
A while your loud, untimely joy suspend,
And let your rash, injurious clamours end :
Unruly murmurs, or ill-tim'd applause, 85
Wrong the best speaker, and the justest cause.
Nor charge on me, ye Greeks, the dire debate :
Know, angry Jove, and all-compelling fate,

With fell Erinny's urg'd my wrath that day
When from Achilles' arms I forc'd the prey. 90
What then could I, against the will of heav'n?
Not by myself, but vengeful Ate driv'n;
She, Jove's dread daughter, fated to infest
The race of mortals, enter'd in my breast.
Not on the ground that haughty fury treads, 95
But prints her lofty footsteps on the heads
Of mighty men; inflicting as she goes
Long fest'ring wounds, inextricable woes!
Of old, she stalk'd amid the bright abodes;
And Jove himself, the sire of men and gods, 100
The world's great ruler, felt her venom'd dart;
Deceiv'd by Juno's wiles and female art;
For when Alcmena's nine long months were run,
And Jove expected his immortal son;
To gods and goddesses th' unruly joy 105
He show'd and vaunted of his matchless boy:
From us (he said) this day an infant springs,
Fated to rule, and born a king of kings.
Saturnia ask'd an oath, to vouch the truth,
And fix'd dominion on the favour'd youth. 110
Th' thund'rer, unsuspecting of the fraud,
Pronounc'd those solemn words that bind a god.
The joyful goddess, from Olympus' height,
Swift to Achaian Argos bent her flight;
Scarce seven moons gone, lay Sthenelus his wife; 115
She push'd her ling'ring infant into life:
Her charm's Alcmena's coming labours stay,
And stop the babe, just issuing to the day.
Then bids Saturnius bear his oath in mind;
'A youth (said she) of Jove's immortal kind 120
'Is this day born: from Sthenelus he springs,
'And claims thy promise to be king of kings.'
Grief seiz'd the Thund'rer, by his oath engag'd;
Stung to the soul, he sorrow'd and he rag'd.
From his ambrosial head, where perch'd she sat, 125
He snatch'd the fury goddess of debate,
'The dread, the irrevocable oath he swore,
'Th' immortal seats should ne'er behold her more;
And whirl'd her headlong down, for ever driv'n
From bright Olympus and the starry heav'n: 130

Thence on the nether world the fury fell;
Ordain'd with man's contentious race to dwell.
Full oft the god his son's hard toils bemoan'd,
Curs'd the dire fury, and in secret groan'd.
Ev'n thus, like Jove himself, was I misled, 135
While raging Hector heap'd our camps with dead.
What can the errors of my rage atone,
My martial troops, my treasures are thy own :
This instant from the navy shall be sent
Whate'er Ulysses promis'd at thy tent : 140
But thou ! appeas'd, propitious to our pray'r,
Resume thy arms, and shine again in war.

O king of nations ! whose superior sway
(Returns Achilles) all our hosts obey !
To keep or send the presents be thy care, 145
To us, 'tis equal ; all we ask is war.
While yet we talk, or but an instant shun
The fight, our glorious work remains undone.
Let ev'ry Greek, who sees my spear confound
The Trojan ranks, and deal destruction round, 150
With emulation, what I act, survey,
And learn from thence the bus'ness of the day.

The son of Peleus thus : and thus replies
The great in counsels, Ithacus the wise.
Tho' godlike thou art by no toils oppress'd, 155
At least our armies claim repast and rest :
Long and laborious must the combat be,
When by the gods inspir'd and led by thee.
Strength is deriv'd from spirits and from blood,
And those augment by gen'rous wine and food ; 160
What boastful son of war, without that stay,
Can last a hero thro' a single day ?

Courage may prompt ; but, ebbing out his strength,
Mere unsupported man must yield at length ;
Shrunk with dry famine, and with toils declin'd, 165
The drooping body will desert the mind :
But built-anew with strength-conferring fare
With limbs and soul untam'd, he tires a war,
Dismiss the people then, and give command,
With strong repast to hearten ev'ry band ; 170
But let the presents to Achilles made,
In full assembly of all Greece be laid.

The king of men shall rise in public sight,
And solemn swear (observant of the right,) 175
That spotless as she came, the maid removes,
Pure from his arms, and guiltless of his loves.
That done, a sumptuous banquet shall be made,
And the full price of injur'd honour paid.
Stretch not henceforth, O prince ! thy sov'reign might,
Beyond the bounds of reason and of right; 180
'Tis the chief praise that e'er to kings belong'd
To right with justice whom with power they wrong'd.
To him the monarch. Just is thy decree;
Thy words give joy, and wisdom breathes in thee.
Each due atonement gladly I prepare, 185
And heav'n regard me as I justly swear !
Here then a while let Greece assembled stay,
Nor great Achilles grudge this short delay;
Till from the fleet our presents be convey'd,
And, Jove attesting, the firm compact made. 190
A train of noble youths the charge shall bear,
'These to select, Ulysses, be thy care :
In order rank'd let all our gifts appear,
And the fair train of captives close the rear ;
'Talthybius shall the victim boar convey, 195
Sacred to Jove, and yon bright orb of day.
For this (the stern Æacides replies)
Some less important season may suffice,
When the stern fury of the war is o'er,
And wrath extinguish'd burns my breast no more. 200
By Hector slain, their faces to the sky,
All grim with gaping wounds, our hero's ly :
Those call to war ! and might my voice incite,
Now, now, this instant should commence the fight.
Then, when the day's complete, let gen'rous bowls, 205
And copious banquets, glad your weary souls.
Let not my palate know the taste of food,
Till my insatiate rage be cloy'd with blood :
Pale lies my friend, with wounds disfigur'd o'er,
And his cold feet are pointed to the door. 210
Revenge is all my soul ! no meaner care,
Int'rest, or thought, has room to harbour there ;
Destruction be my feast, and mortal wounds,
And scenes of blood, and agonizing sounds.

O first of Greeks, (Ulysses thus rejoin'd) 215
The best and bravest of the warrior kind !
Thy praise it is in dreadful camps to shine,
But old experience and calm wisdom, mine.
Then hear my counsel, and to reason yield ;
The bravest soon are satiate of the field ; 220
Tho' vast the heaps that strow the crimson plain,
The bloody harvest brings but little gain :
The scale of conquest ever wav'ring lies,
Great Jove but turns it, and the victor dies !
The great, the bold, by thousands daily fall, 225
And endless were the grief, to weep for all.
Eternal sorrows what avails to shed ?
Greece honours not with solemn fasts the dead :
Enough, when death demands the brave, to pay
The tribute of a melancholy day. 230
One chief with patience to the grave resign'd,
Our care devolves on others left behind.
Let gen'rous food supplies of strength produce,
Let rising spirits flow from sprightly juice,
Let their warm heads with scenes of battle glow, 235
And pour new furies on the feebler foe.
Yet a short interval, and none shall dare
Expect a second summons to the war ;
Who waits for that, the dire effect shall find,
If trembling in the ships he lags behind. 240
Embodied, to the battle let us bend,
And all at once on haughty Troy descend.
And now the delegates Ulysses sent,
To bear the presents from the royal tent.
The sons of Nestor, Phyleus' valiant heir, 245
Thias and Merion, thunderbolts of war,
With Lycomedes of Creiontian strain,
And Menalippus, form'd the chosen train.
Swift, as the word was giv'n, the youths obey'd,
'Twice ten bright vases in the midst they laid : 250
A row of six fair tripods then succeeds ;
And twice the number of high bounding steeds :
Sev'n captives next a lovely line compose ;
The eight Eriseis, like a blooming rose,
Clos'd the bright band : great Ithacus, before, 255
First of the train, the golden talents bore ;

The rest in public view the chiefs dispose,
A splendid scene ! then Agamemnon rose ;
The boar Talthybius held : the Grecian lord
Drew the broad cutlass sheath'd beside his sword ; 260
The stubborn bristles from the victim's brow
He crops, and off'ring, meditates his vow.
His hands uplifted to the attesting skies,
On heav'ns broad marble roof were fix'd his eyes !
The solemn words a deep attention draw, 265
And Greece around sat thrill'd with sacred awe.

Witness thou first ! thou greatest pow'r above !
All-good, all-wise, and all-surveying Jove !
And mother earth, and heav'ns revolving light,
And ye, fell furies of the realms of night, 270
Who rule the dead and horrid woes prepare
For perjur'd kings, and all who falsely swear !
The black-ey'd maid inviolate removes,
Pure and unconscious of my manly loves.
If this be false, heav'n all its vengeance shed, 275
And levell'd thunder strike my guilty head !

With that, his weapon deep inflicts the wound ;
The bleeding savage tumbles to the ground,
The sacred herald rolls the victim slain
(A feast for fish) into the foaming main. 280

Then thus Achilles. Hear, ye Greeks ! and know,
Whate'er we feel, 'tis Jove inflicts the woe :
Not else Atrides could our rage inflame,
Nor from my arms unwilling force the dame.
'Twas Jove's high will alone, o'er-ruling all, 285
That doom'd our strife, and doom'd the Greeks to fall.
Go then, ye chiefs ! indulge the genial rite,
Achilles waits ye, and expects the fight.

The speedy council at his word adjourn'd ;
To their black vessels all the Greeks return'd. 290
Achilles sought his tent. His train before
March'd onward, bending with the gifts they bore.
Those in the tents the squires industrious spread :
The foaming coursers to the stalls they led.
To their new seats the female captives move, 295
Briseis, radiant as the-queen of love,
Slow as she past, beheld with sad survey,
Where, gash'd with cruel wounds, Patroclus lay,

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Prone on the body fell the heav'nly fair, Beat her sad breast, and tore her golden hair :		300
All beautiful in grief, her humid eyes, Shining with tears, she lifts, and thus she cries.		
Ah youth for ever dear, for ever kind, Once tender friend of my distracted mind !		
I left thee fresh in life, in beauty gay, Now find thee cold, inanimated clay !		305
What woes my wretched race of life attend ? Sorrows on sorrows, never doom'd to end !		
The first-lov'd consort of my virgin bed Before these eyes in fatal battle bled :		310
My three brave brothers in one mournful day All trode the dark, irremeable way ;		
Thy friendly hand uprear'd me from the plain, And dry'd my sorrows for a husband slain ;		
Achilles' care you promis'd I should prove, The first, the dearest partner of his love,		315
That rites divine should ratify the band, And make me empress in his native land.		
Accept these grateful tears ! for thee they flow, For thee, that ever felt another's woe !		320
Her sister captives echo'd groan from groan, Nor mourn'd Patroclus' fortunes but their own.		
The leaders press'd the chief on ev'ry side, Unmov'd he heard them, and with sighs deny'd.		
If yet Achilles have a friend whose care Is bent to please him, this request forbear :		325
Till yonder sun descend, ah let me pay To grief and anguish one abstemious day,		
He spoke, and from the warriors turn'd his face Yet still the brother-kings of Atreus' race,		330
Nestor, Idomeneus, Ulysses sage, And Phœnix, strive to calm his grief and rage ;		
His rage they calm not, nor his grief controul, He groans, he raves, he sorrows from his soul.		
Thou too Patroclus ! (thus his heart he vents) Once spread th' inviting banquet in our tents :		335
Thy sweet society, thy winning care, Once stay'd Achilles, rushing to the war.		
But now, alas ! to death's cold arms resign'd, What banquet but revenge can glad my mind ?		340

What greater sorrow could afflict my breast,
 What more, if hoary Peleus were deceas'd !
 Who now, perhaps, in Phthia dreads to hear
 His sons sad fate, and drops a tender tear.
 What more, should Neoptolemus the brave 345
 (My only offspring,) sink into the grave ?
 If yet that offspring lives : I distant far,
 Of all neglectful, wage a hateful war.)
 I could not this, this cruel stroke attend ;
 Fate claim'd Achilles, but might spare his friend. 350
 I hop'd Patroclus might survive, to rear
 My tender orphan with a parent's care,
 From Scyros isle conduct him o'er the main,
 And glad his eyes with his paternal reign,
 The lofty palace, and the large domain. 355 }
 For Peleus breathes no more the vital air,
 Or drags a wretched life of age and care.
 But till the news of my sad fate invades
 His hast'ning soul, and sinks him to the shades.
 Sighing he said : his grief the heroes join'd, 360
 Each stole a tear for what he left behind.
 Their mingled grief the sire of heav'n survey'd,
 And thus, with pity to his blue-ey'd maid.
 Is then Achilles now no more thy care,
 And dost thou thus desert the great in war : 365
 Lo, where yon sails their canvass wings extend,
 All comfortless he sits, and wails his friend :
 Ere thirst and want his forces have oppress,
 Haste and infuse ambrosia in his breast.
 He spoke, and sudden at the word of Jove, 370
 Shot the descending goddess from above.
 So swift thro' æther the shrill harpy springs,
 The wide air floating to her ample wings,
 To great Achilles she her flight address,
 And pour'd divine ambrosia in his breast, 375
 With nectar sweet, (refection of the gods !)
 Then, swift ascending, sought the bright abodes.
 Now issued from the ships the warrior train,
 And like a deluge pour'd upon the plain.
 As when the piercing blasts of Boreas blow, 380
 And scatter'd o'er the fields the driving snow ;

From dusky clouds the fleecy winter flies,
 Whose dazzling lustre whitens all the skies :
 So helms succeeding helms, so shields from shields 384
 Catch the quick beams, and brighten all the fields ;
 Broad glitt'ring breast-plates, spears with pointed rays,
 Mix in one stream, reflecting blaze on blaze :
 Thick beats the centre as the coursers bound,
 With splendour flammeth the skies, & laugh the fields around.

Full in the midst, high-tow'ring o'er the rest, 390
 His limbs in arms divine Achilles drest ;
 Arms which the father of the fire bestow'd,
 Forg'd on th' eternal anvils of the god.
 Grief and revenge his furious heart inspire,
 His glowing eye-balls roll with living fire ; 395
 He grinds his teeth, and, furious with delay,
 O'erlooks th' embattel'd host, and hopes the bloody day.

The silver cuishies first his thighs infold :
 Then o'er his breast was brac'd the hollow gold.
 The brazen sword a various baldric ty'd, 400
 That, starr'd with gems, hung glitt'ring at his side ;
 And, like the moon, the broad refulgent shield
 Blaz'd with long rays, and gleam'd athwart the field.

So to night-wand'ring sailors, pale with fears,
 Wide o'er the watry waste, a light appears, 405
 Which on the far-seen mountain blazing high,
 Streams from some lonely watch-tow'r to the sky :
 With mournful eyes they gaze, and gaze again :
 Loud howls the storm, and drives them o'er the main.

Next, his high head the helmet grac'd ; behind 410
 The sweepy crest hung floating in the wind :
 Like the red star, that from his flaming hair
 Shakes down diseases, pestilence and war :
 So stream'd the golden honours from his head,
 Trembled the sparkling plumes, and the loose glories
 shed. 415

'The chief beholds himself with wond'ring eyes !
 His arms he poises, and his motions tries ;
 Buoy'd by some inward force, he seems to swim,
 And feels a pinion lifting ev'ry limb.

And now he shakes his great paternal spear, 420
 Pond'rous and huge ! which not a Greek could rear.

From Pelion's cloudy top an ash entire
 Old Chiron fell'd, and shap'd it for his sire ;
 A spear which stern Achilles only wields,
 The death of heroes, and the dread of fields : 425

Automedon and Alcimus prepare
 Th' immortal coursers, and the radiant car,
 (The silver traces sweeping at their side),
 Their fiery mouths resplendent bridles ty'd,
 The iv'ry studded reins, return'd behind, 430
 Way'd o'er their backs, and to the chariot join'd.
 The charioteer then whirl'd the lash around,
 And swift ascended at one active bound.

All bright in heav'nly arms, above his squire
 Achilles mounts, and sets the field on fire ; 435
 Not brighter Phœbus in th' ethereal way,
 Flames from his chariot, and restores the day,
 High o'er the host all terrible he stands,
 And thunders to his steeds these dread commands.

Xanthus and Belius ! of Podarges' strain 440
 (Unless ye boast that heavenly race in vain),
 Be swift, be mindful of the load ye bear,
 And learn to make your master more your care :
 Thro' falling squadrons bear my slaught'ring sword,
 Nor, as ye left Patroclus leave your lord. 445

The gen'rous Xanthus, as the words he said,
 Seem'd sensible of woe and droop'd his head ;
 Trembling he stood before the golden wain,
 And bow'd to dust the honours of his mane,
 When, strange to tell ! (so Juno will'd) he broke 450
 Eternal silence, and portentous spoke.

Achilles ! yes ! this day at least we bear
 Thy rage in safety thro' the files of war ;
 But come it will, the fatal time must come,
 Nor ours the fault, but god decrees thy doom. 455

Not thro' our crime, or slowness in the course,
 Fell thy Patroclus, but by heav'nly force ;
 The bright far-shooting god who gilds the day
 (Confest we saw him) tore his arms away.
 No—could our swiftness o'er the winds prevail, 460
 Or beat the pinions of the western gale,
 All were in vain—the fates the death demand,
 Due to a mortal and immortal hand.

Then ceas'd for ever, by the furies ty'd,
His fateful voice. Th' intrepid chief reply'd, 465
With unabated rage—So let it be!
Portents and prodigies are lost on me.
I know my fates: to die, to see no more
My much-lov'd parents, and my native shore—
Enough—when heav'n ordains, I sink in night; 470
Now perish Troy! he said, and rush'd to fight.

THE

I L I A D.

BOOK XX.

The Argument.

The battle of the gods, and the acts of Achilles.

JUPITER, upon Achilles's return to the battle, calls a council of the gods, and permits them to assist either party. The terrors of the combat described, when the deities are engaged. Apollo encourages Æneas to meet Achilles. After a long conversation, these two heroes encounter; but Æneas is preserved by the assistance of Neptune. Achilles falls upon the rest of the Trojans, and is upon the point of killing Hector, but Apollo conveys him away in a cloud. Achilles pursues the Trojans with a great slaughter.

The same day continues. The scene is in the field before Troy.

THUS round Pelides, breathing war and blood,
Greece, sheath'd in arms, beside her vessels stood;
While near impending from a neighb'ring height,
Troy's black battalions wait the shock of fight.
Then Jove to Themis gives command to call 5
The gods to council in the starry hall:
Swift o'er Olympus' hundred hills she flies,
And summons all the senate of the skies.
These shining on, in long procession come
To Jove's eternal adamant dome. 10
Not one was absent, not a rural pow'r,
That haunts the verdant gloom, or rosy bow'r,
Each fair-hair'd dryad of the shady wood,
Each azure sister of the silver flood;

All but old ocean, hoary sire : who keeps 15
 His ancient seat beneath the sacred deeps.
 On marble thrones with lucid columns crown'd,
 (The work of Vulcan), sat the pow'rs around,
 Ev'n * he whose trident sways the watry reign,
 Heard the loud summons, and forsook the main, 20
 Assum'd his throne amid the bright abodes,
 And question'd thus the sire of men and gods.

What movest the god who heav'n and earth commands,
 And grasps the thunder in his awful hands,
 Thus to convene the whole ethereal state ? 25
 Is Greece and Troy the subject in debate ?
 Already met, the lowring hosts appear,
 And death stands ardent on the edge of war.

'Tis true, (the cloud-compelling power replies),
 This day we call the council of the skies 30
 In care of human race ; ev'n Jove's own eye
 Sees with regret unhappy mortals die.
 Far on Olympus' top, in secret state,
 Ourself will sit, and see the hand of fate
 Work out our will. Celestial pow'rs ! descend, 35
 And, as our minds direct, your succour lend
 To either host. Troy soon must lie o'erthrown
 If uncontrol'd Achilles fights alone :
 Their troops but lately durst not meet his eyes ;
 What can they now, if in his rage he rise ? 40
 Assist them, gods ! or Ilion's sacred wall
 May fall this day, tho' fate forbids the fall.

He said, and fir'd their heav'nly breasts with rage :
 On adverse parts the warring gods engage.
 Heav'n's awful queen ; and he whose azure round 45
 Girds the vast globe ; the maid in arms renown'd ;
 Hermes, of profitable arts the sire :
 And Vulcan, the black sov'reign of the fire :
 These to the fleet repair with instant flight ;
 The vessels tremble as the gods alight. 50
 In aid of Troy, Latona, Phœbus, came,
 Mars fiery helm'd, the laughter-loving dame,

* Neptune.

Xanthus, whose streams in golden currents flow,
And the chaste huntress of the silver bow.
Ere yet the gods their various aid employ, 55
Each Argive bosom swell'd with manly joy,
While great Achilles, (terror of the plain),
Long lost to battle, shone in arms again.
Dreadful he stood, in front of all his host ;
Pale Troy beheld, and seem'd already lost ; 60
Her bravest heroes pant with inward fear,
And trembling see another god of war.

But when the pow'rs descending swell'd the fight,
Then tumult rose ; fierce Rage and pale Affright
Vary'd each face ; then Discord sounds alarms, 65
Earth echoes, and the nations rush to arms.
Now thro' the trembling-shores Minerva calls,
And now she thunders from the Grecian walls.
Mars, hov'ring o'er his Troy, his terror shrouds
In gloomy tempests, and a night of clouds : 70
Now thro' each Trojan heart he fury pours,
With voice divine, from Ilion's topmost tow'rs,
Now shouts to Simois, from her beauteous hill ;
The mountain shook, the rapid stream stood still.
Above, the sire of gods his thunder rolls, 75
And peals on peals redoubled rend the poles.
Beneath, stern Neptune shakes the solid ground ;
The forests wave, the mountains nod around ;
Thro' all their summits tremble Ida's woods,
And from their sources boil her hundred floods. 80
Troy's turrets totter on the rocking plain ;
And the toss'd navies beat the heaving main.
Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,
Th' infernal monarch rear'd his hoary head,
Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should lay
His dark dominions open to the day, 86
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
Abhor'd by men, and dreadful ev'n to gods.

Such war th' immortal wage ; such horrors rend
The world's vast concave, when the gods contend. 90
First silver-shafted Phœbus took the plain
Against blue Neptune, monarch of the main ;
The god of arms his giant bulk display'd,
Oppos'd to Pallas, war's triumphant maid.

Against Latona march'd the son of May : 95

The quiver'd Dian, sister of the day,

{ Her golden arrows sounding at her side,

Saturna, majesty of heav'n defy'd.

With fiery Vulcan last in battle stands

The sacred flood that rolls on golden sands ; 100

Xanthus his name with those of heav'nly birth,

But call'd Scamandar by the sons of earth.

While thus the gods in various league engage,

Achilles glow'd with more than mortal rage :

Hector he sought ; in search of Hector turn'd 105

His eyes around, for Hector only burn'd ;

And burst like lightning thro' the ranks, and vow'd

To glut the god of battles with his blood.

Aeneas was the first who dar'd to stay ;

Apollo wedg'd him in the warrior's way, 110

But swell'd his bosom with undaunted might,

Half-forc'd and half-persuaded to the fight.

Like young Lycaon of the royal line,

In voice and aspect seem'd the pow'r divine ;

And bade the chief reflect how late with scorn 115

In distant threats he brav'd the goddess borne.

Then thus the hero of Anchises' strain,

To meet Pelides you persuade in vain :

Already have I met, nor, void of fear,

Observ'd the fury of his flying spear ; 120

From Ida's woods he chas'd us to the field, &

Our force he scatter'd, and our herds he kill'd :

Lyrnessus, Pedassus, in ashes lay ;

But (Jove assisting) I surviv'd the day.

Else had I sunk oppress'd in fatal fight, 125

By fierce Achilles and Minerva's might.

Where'er he mov'd the goddess shone before,

And bath'd his brazen lance in hostile gore.

What mortal man Achilles can sustain ?

Th' immortals guard him thro' the dreadful plain, 130 }

And suffer not his dart to fall in vain.

Were God my aid, this arm shall check his pow'r,

Tho' strong in battle as a brazen tow'r.

To whom the son of Jove. That god implore,

And be what great Achilles was before. 135

From heav'nly Venus thou deriv'st thy strain,
And he, but from a sister of the main;
And aged sea-god, father of his line,
But Jove himself the sacred source of thine.
Then lift thy weapon for a noble blow, 140
Nor fear the vaunting of a mortal foe.

This said, and spirit breath'd into his breast,
Thro' the thick troops th' embolden'd hero prest :
His vent'rous act the white-arm'd queen survey'd,
And thus, assembling all the pow'rs she said. 145
Behold an action, gods ! that claims your care,
Lo ! great Æneas rushing to the war,
Against Pelides he directs his course,
Phœbus impels, and Phœbus gives him force.
Restrain his bold career ; at least, t' attend 150
Our favour'd hero, let some pow'r descend.
To guard his life, and add to his renown,
We, the great armament of heav'n, came down.
Hereafter let him fall, as fates design,
That spun so short his life's illustrious line : 155
But lest some adverse god now cross his way,
Give him to know, what pow'rs assist this day :
For how shall mortal stand the dire alarms,
When heav'n's refulgent host appear in arms ?

Thus she, and thus the god whose force can make
The solid globe's eternal basis shake. 161
Against the might of man, so feeble known,
Why should celestial pow'rs exert their own ?
Suffice from yonder mount to view the scene ;
And leave to war the fates of mortal men. 165
But if the armipotent, or god of light,
Obstruct Achilles, or commence the fight,
Thence on the gods of Troy we swift descend :
Full soon, I doubt not, shall the conflict end,
And these, in ruin and confusion hurld, 170
Yield to our conqu'ring arms the lower world.

Thus having said, the tyrant of the sea,
Cærulean Neptune rose, and led the way.
Advanc'd upon the field there stood a mound
Of earth congested, wall'd and trench'd around ; 175
In elder times to guard Alcides made,
(The work of Trojans, with Minerva's aid,)

What time a vengful monster of the main
Swept the wide shore, and drove him to the plain.

Here Neptune and the gods of Greece repair, 180

With clouds encompass'd, and a veil of air :

The adverse pow'rs, around Apollo laid,

Crown the fair hills that silver Simois shade.

In circle close each heav'nly party sat,

Intent to form the future scheme of fate ; 185

But mixt not yet in fight, tho' Jove on high

Gives the loud signal, and the heav'ns reply.

Meanwhile the rushing armies hide the ground ;

The trampled centre yields a hollow sound :

Steeds cas'd in mail, and chiefs in armour bright, 190

The gleamy champion glows with brazen light.

Amid both hosts (a dreadful space) appear,

There great Achilles ; bold Æneas here.

With tow'ring strides Æneas first advanc'd ;

The nodding plumage on his helmet danc'd, 195

Spread o'er his breast the fencing shield he bore,

And as he mov'd, his jav'lin flam'd before.

Not so Pelides ; furious to engage,

He rush'd impetuous. Such the lion's rage,

Who viewing first his foes with scornful eyes, 200

Tho' all in arms the peopled city rise,

Stalks careless on with unregarding pride ;

Till at the length, by some brave youth defy'd,

To his bold spear the savage turns alone,

He murmurs fury with an hollow groan ; 205

He grins, he foams, he rolls his eyes around ;

Lash'd by his tail his heaving sides resound ;

He calls up all his rage ; he grinds his teeth,

Resolv'd on vengeance, or resolv'd on death.

So fierce Achilles on Æneas flies ; 210

So stands Æneas, and his force defies.

Ere yet the stern encounter join'd, begun

The seed of Thetis thus to Venus' son.

Why comes Æneas thro' the ranks so far ?

Seeks he to meet Achilles' arm in war, 215

In hope the realms of Priam to enjoy,

And prove his merits to the throne of Troy ?

Grant that beneath thy lance Achilles dies,

The partial monarch may refuse the prize ;

Sons he has many ; those thy pride may quell ; 220
And 'tis his fault to love those sons too well.
Or, in reward of thy victorious hand,
Has 'Troy propos'd some spacious tract of land?
An ample forest or a fair domain,
Of hills for vines, and arable for grain? 225
Ev'n this, perhaps, will hardly prove thy lot.
But can Achilles be so soon forgot ?
Once (as I think) you saw this brandish'd spear,
And then the great Æneas seem'd to fear.
With hearty haste from Ida's mount he fled, 230
Nor, till he reach'd Lyrnessus, turn'd his head.
Her lofty walls not long our progress stay'd ;
Those, Pallas, Jove, and we, in ruins laid :
In Grecian chains her captive race were cast ;
'Tis true, the great Æneas fled too fast. 235
Defrauded of my conquest once before,
What then I lost, the gods this day restore.
Go ; while thou may'st, avoid the threaten'd fate ;
Fools stay to feel it, and are wise too late.
To this Anchises' son. Such words employ 240
To one that fears thee, some unwarlike boy ;
Such we disdain ; the best may be defy'd
With mean reproaches, and unmanly pride :
Unworthy the high race from which we came,
Proclaim'd so loudly by the voice of fame ; 245
Each from illustrious fathers draws his line ;
Each goddess-born ; half human, half divine.
Thetis this day, or Venus' offspring dies,
And tears shall trickle from celestial eyes :
For when two heroes, thus deriv'd, contend, 250
'Tis not in words the glorious strife can end.
If yet thou farther seek to learn my birth,
(A tale resounded thro' the spacious earth,)
Hear how the glorious origin we prove
From ancient Dardanus, the first from Jove ; 255
Dardania's walls he rais'd ; for Ilium then
(The city since of many-languag'd men)
Was not. The natives were content to till
The shady foot of Ida's fountful hill.
From Dardanus, great Erichthonius springs, 260
The richest, once, of Asia's wealthy kings ;

Three thousand mares his spacious pastures bred,
Three thousand foals beside their mothers fed.
Boreas, enamour'd of the sprightly train,
Conceal'd his godhead in a flowing mane, 265
With voice dissembled to his loves he neigh'd,
And cours'd the dappled beauties o'er the mead :
Hence sprung twelve others of unrival'd kind,
Swift as their mother mares, and father wind.
These lightly skimming, when they swept the plain,
Nor ply'd the grass, nor bent the tender grain ; 271
And when along the level seas they flew,
Scarce on the surface curl'd the briny dew.
Such Erichthonius was : from him there came
The sacred Fros, of whom the Trojan name. 275
Three sons renown'd adorn'd his nuptial bed,
Ilus, Assaracus, and Ganymede :
The matchless Ganymede, divinely fair,
Whom, heav'n enamour'd, snatch'd to upper air,
To bear the cup of Jove, (ethereal guest,) 280
The grace and glory of th' ambrosial feast.
The two remaining sons the line divide :
First rose Laomedon from Ilus' side ;
From him Tithonus, now in cares grown old,
And Priam, (blest with Hector, brave and bold ;) 285
Clytius and Lampus, ever-honour'd pair ;
And Hicetaon, thunderbolt of war.
From great Assaracus sprung Capys : he
Begot Anchises, and Anchises me.
Such is our race ; 'tis fortune gives us birth, 290
But Jove alone endues the soul with worth :
He, source of pow'r and might ! with boundless sway,
All human courage, gives or takes away.
Long in the field of words, we may contend,
Reproach is infinite and knows no end, 295
Arm'd or with truth or falsehood, right or wrong,
So voluble a weapon is the tongue ;
Wounded we wound ; and neither side can fail,
For ev'ry man has equal strength to rail :
Women alone, when in the streets they jar, 300
Perhaps excel us in the wordy war ;
Like us they stand, encompass'd with the crowd,
And vent their anger impotent and loud.

Cease then—Our business in the field of fight
 Is not to question, but to prove our might. 305
 To all those insults thou hast offer'd here,
 Receive this answer : 'tis my flying spear.
 He spoke. With all his force the jav'lin flung,
 Fix'd deep, and loudly in the buckler rung,
 Far, on his out-stretch'd arm, Pelides held 310
 (To meet the thund'ring lance) his dreadful shield,
 That trembled as it stuck ; nor, void of fear,
 Saw, ere it fell, th' immeasurable spear.
 His fears were vain ; impenetrable charms—
 Secur'd the temper of th' etherial arms. 315
 Thro' two strong plates the point its passage held,
 But stopp'd, and rested, by the third repell'd ;
 Five plates of various metal, various mould,
 Compos'd the shield, of brass each outward fold,
 Of tin each inward, and the middle gold : 320 }
 There struck the lance. Then, rising ere he threw,
 The forceful spear of great Achilles flew,
 And pierc'd the Dardan shield's extremest bound,
 Where the shrill brass return'd a sharper sound :
 Thro' the thin verge the Pelean weapon glides, 325
 And the slight cov'ring of expanded hides.
 Æneas his contracted body bends,
 And o'er him high the riven targe extends,
 Sees thro' its parting plates, the upper air,
 And at his back perceives the quiv'ring spear. 330
 A fate, so near him, chills his soul with fright,
 And swims before his eyes the many-colour'd light.
 Achilles, rushing in with dreadful cries,
 Draws his broad blade, and at Æneas flies :
 Æneas, rousing as the foe came on, 335
 (With force collected,) heaves a mighty stone :
 A mass enormous ! which in modern days
 No two of earth's degen'rate sons could raise.
 But ocean's god, whose earthquakes rock the ground,
 Saw the distress, and mov'd the pow'rs around. 340
 Lo on the brink of fate Æneas stands,
 An instant victim to Achilles' hands :
 By Phœbus urg'd ; but Phœbus has bestow'd
 His aid in vain : the man o'erpow'rs the god :

And can ye see this righteous chief atone,
With guiltless blood for vices not his own ;
To all the gods his constant vows were paid :
Sure, tho' he was for Troy, he claims our aid.
Fate wills not this ; nor thus can Jove resign
The future father of the Dardan line : 350
The first great ancestor obtain'd his grace,
And still his love descends on all the race.
For Priam now, and Priam's faithless kind,
At length are odious to th' all-seeing mind ;
On great Æneas shall devolve the reign, 355
And sons succeeding sons the lasting line sustain.
The great earth-shaker thus : to whom replies
'Th' imperial goddess with the radiant eyes.
Good as he is, to immolate or spare
The Dardan prince, O Neptune, be thy care ; 360
Pallas and I, by all that gods can bind,
Have sworn destruction to the Trojan kind ;
Not ev'n an instant to protract their fate,
Or save one member of the sinking state ;
Till her last flame be quench'd with her last gore, 365
And ev'n her crumbling ruins are no more.

The king of ocean to the fight descends,
Thro' all the whistling darts his course he bends,
Swift interpos'd between the warriors flies,
And casts thick darkness o'er Achilles' eyes. 370
From great Æneas' shield the spear he drew,
And at its master's feet the weapon threw.
That done, with force divine he snatch'd on high
The Dardan prince, and bore him thro' the sky,
Smooth gliding without step, above the heads 375
Of warring heroes, and of bounding steeds.
Till at the battle's utmost verge they light,
Where the slow Caucas close the rear of fight :
The godhead there (his heav'nly form confess'd)
With words like these the panting chief address'd. 380

What pow'r, O prince, with force inferior far
Urg'd thee to meet Achilles' arm in war !
Henceforth beware, nor antedate thy doom,
Defrauding fate of all thy fame to come.
But when the day decreed (for come it must) 385
Shall lay this dreadful hero in the dust,

Let then the furies of that arm be known,
Secure, no Grecian force transcends thy own.

With that, he left him wond'ring as he lay,
Then from Achilles chas'd the mist away : 390

Sudden, returning with the stream of light,
The scene of war came rushing on his sight.
Then thus, amaz'd : What wonders strike my mind !

My spear, that parted on the wings of wind,
Laid heré before me, and the Dardan lord 395

That fell this instant, vanish'd from my sword !

I thought alone with mortals to contend,

But pow'rs celestial sure this foe defend.

Great as he is, our arm he scarce will try,
Content for once, with all his gods, to fly. 400

Now then let others bleed—This said aloud

He vents his fury, and inflames the croud :

O Greeks (he cries, and ev'ry rank alarms),

Join battle, man to man, and arms to arms !

'Tis not in me, tho' favour'd by the sky, 405

To mow whole troops, and make whole armies fly :

No god can singly such a host engage,

Not Mars himself, nor great Minerva's rage.

But whatsoe'er Achilles can inspire,

Whate'er of active force, or acting fire ; 410

Whate'er this heart can prompt, or bid obey ;

All, all Achilles, Greeks : is yours to-day.

Thro' yon wide host this arm shall scatter fear,

And thin the squadrons with my single spear.

He said : nor less elate with martial joy. 415

The godlike Hector warm'd the troops of Troy.

Trojans, to war ! think Hector leads you on ;

Nor dread the vaunts of Peleus' haughty son.

Deeds must decide our fate. Ev'n those with words

Insult the brave, who tremble at their swords : 420

The weakest atheist wretch all heav'n defies,

But shrinks and shudders when the thunder flies.

Nor from yon boaster shall your chief retire,

Not tho' his heart were steel, his hands were fire :

That fire, that steel, your Hector should withstand, 425

And brave that vengeful heart, that dreadful hand.

Thus (breathing rage thro' all) the hero said ;

A wood of lances rises round his head,

Clamours on clamours tempest all the air,
They join, they throng, they thicken to the war. 430
But Phœbus warns him from high heav'n to shun
The single fight with Thetis' godlike son ;
More safe to combat in the mingled band,
Nor tempt too near the terrors of his hand.

He hears, obedient to the god of light, 435
And, plung'd within the ranks, awaits the fight.

Then fierce Achilles, shouting to the skies,
On Troy's whole force with boundless fury flies.
First falls Iphytion, at his army's head ;
Brave was the chief, and brave the host he led ; 440
From great Otrynteus he deriv'd his blood,
His mother was a Nais of the flood :

Beneath the shades of Tmolus, crown'd with snow,
From Hyde's walls he rul'd the lands below ;
Fierce as he springs, the sword his head divides ; 445
The parted visage falls on equal sides :
With loud-resounding arms he strikes the plain ;
While thus Achilles glories o'er the slain.

Lie there, Otryntides ! the Trojan earth
Receives thee dead, tho' Gygæ boast thy birth ; 450
Those beauteous fields where Hyllus' waves are roll'd,
And plenteous Hermes swells with tides of gold,
Are thine no more—Th' insulting hero said,
And left him sleeping in eternal shade.
The rolling wheels of Greece the body tore, 455
And dash'd their axles with no vulgar gore.

Demoleon next, Antenor's offspring, laid
Breathless in dust, the price of rashness paid ;
Th' impatient steel with full descending sway
Forc'd thro' his brazen helm its furious way. 460
Resistless drove the batter'd skull before,
And dash'd and mingled all the brains with gore.
'This sees Hippodamas, and, seiz'd with fright,
Deserts his chariot for a swifter flight :

The lance arrests him: an ignoble wound 465
The panting Trojan rivets to the ground.
He groans away his soul ; not louder roars
At Neptune's shrine on Helice's high shores
The victim bull ; the rocks rebellow round,
And Ocean listens to the grateful sound. 470

Then fell on Polydore his vengeful rage,
 The youngest hope of Priam's stooping age !
 (Whose feet for swiftness in the race surpast ;)
 Of all his sons, the dearest, and the last.
 To the forbidden field he takes his flight 475
 In the first folly of a youthful knight,
 'To vaunt his swiftness wheels around the plain,
 But vaunts not long, with all his swiftness slain.
 Struck where the crossing belts unite behind,
 And golden rings the double back-plate join'd : 480
 Forth thro' the navel burst the thrilling steel ;
 And on his knees with piercing shrieks he fell :
 The rushing intrails pour'd upon the ground,
 His hands collect ; and darkness wraps him round.
 When Hector view'd, all ghastly in his gore, 485
 Thus sadly slain, th' unhappy Polydore ;
 A cloud of sorrow overcast his sight,
 His soul no longer brook'd the distant fight,
 Full in Achilles' dreadful front he came,
 And shook his jav'lin like a waving flame. 490
 'The son of Pelcus sees, with joy possest,
 His heart high-bounding in his rising breast ;
 And, lo ! the man, on whom black fates attend,
 'The man, that slew Achilles, in his friend !
 No more shall Hector's and Pelides' spear 495
 'Turn from each other in the walks of war——
 Then with revengeful eyes he scann'd him o'er ;
 Come and receive thy fate ! he spoke no more.
 Hector undaunted, thus. Such words employ
 To one that dreads thee, some unwarlike boy : 500
 Such we could give, defying and defy'd,
 Mean intercourse of obloquy and pride !
 I know thy force to mine superior far,
 But heav'n alone confers success in war :
 Mean as I am, the gods may guide my dart, 505
 And give it entrance in a braver heart.
 'Then parts the lance : but Pallas heav'nly breath
 Far from Achilles wafts the winged death :
 'The bidden dart again to Hector flies,
 And at the feet of its great master lies. 510
 Achilles closes with his hated foe,
 His heart and eyes with flaming fury glow ;

But present to his aid Apollo shrouds
 The favour'd hero in a veil of clouds.
 Thrice struck Pelides with indignant heart, 515
 Thrice in impassive air he plung'd the dart;
 The spear a fourth time bury'd in the cloud;
 He foams with fury, and exclaims aloud.

Wretch! thou hast 'scap'd again, once more thy flight
 Has sav'd thee, and the partial god of light. 520
 But long thou shalt not thy just fate withstand,
 If any pow'r assist Achilles' hand.

Fly then inglorious! but thy flight this day
 Whole hecatombs of Trojan ghosts shall pay.

With that, he gluts his rage on numbers slain: 525

Then Dryops tumbled to th' ensanguin'd plain,
 Pierc'd thro' the neck: he left him panting there
 And stopp'd Demuchus, great Philetor's heir,
 Gigantic chief! deep gash'd th' enormous blade,
 And for the soul an ample passage made. 530

Laogonus and Dardanus expire,
 The valiant sons of an unhappy sire.
 Both in one instant from the chariot hurl'd,
 Sunk in one instant to the nether world;
 This diff'rence only their sad fates afford, 535
 That one the spear destroy'd, and one the sword.

Nor less unpity'd, young Alastor bleeds,
 In vain his youth, in vain his beauty pleads;
 In vain he begs thee with suppliant's moan,
 To spare a form, an age, so like thy own! 540
 Unhappy boy! no pray'r, no moving art,
 E'er bent that fierce, inexorable heart!

While yet he trembled at his knees and cry'd,
 The ruthless faulchion ope'd his tender side;
 The panting liver pours a flood of gore 545
 That drowns his bosom till he pants no more.

Thro' Mulius' head then drove th' impetuous spear,
 The warrior falls, transfix'd from ear to ear.

Thy life, Echeclus! next the sword bereaves,
 Deep thro' the front the pond'rous faulchion cleaves;
 Warm'd in the brain the smoking weapon lies, 551

The purple death comes floating o'er his eyes.
 Then brave Deucalion dy'd; the dart was flung
 Where the knit nerves the pliant elbow strung;

He dropt his arm, an unassisting weight, 555
And stood, all-impotent, expecting fate :
Full on his neck the falling faulchion sped,
From his broad shoulders hew'd his crested head ;
Forth from the bone the spinal marrow flies,
And, sunk in dust, the corps extended lies. 560
Rhigmus, whose race from fruitful Thracia came,
(The son of Pireus, an illustrious name,)
Succeeds to fate : the spear his belly rends,
Prone from his car the thund'ring chief descends :
The squire, who saw expiring on the ground 565
His prostrate master, rein'd the steeds around :
His back, scarce turn'd, the Pelian jav'lin gor'd ;
And stretch'd the servant o'er his dying lord.
As when a flame the winding valley fills,
And runs on crackling shrubs between the hills : 570
'Then o'er the stubble up the mountain flies,
Fires the high woods, and blazes to the skies,
'This way and that, the spreading torrent roars ;
So sweeps the hero thro' the wasted shores ;
Around him wide immense destruction pours, 575
And earth is delug'd with the sanguine show'rs.
As with autumnal harvests cover'd o'er,
And thick bestrown, lies Ceres' sacred floor,
When round and round, with never weary'd pain
The trampling steers beat out th' unnumber'd grain :
So the fierce coursers, as the chariot rolls, 581
'Tread down whole ranks, and crush out heroes' souls.
Dash'd from their hoofs, while o'er the dead they fly,
Black, bloody drops the smoking chariot dye :
'The spiky wheels thro' heaps of carnage tore, 585
And thick the groaning axles drop'd with gore.
High o'er the scene of death Achilles stood,
All grim with dust, all horrible in blood :
Yet still insatiate, still with rage on flame,
Such is the lust of never dying fame ! 590

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XXI.

The Argument.

The battle in the river Scamander.

THE Trojans fly before Achilles; some towards the town, others to the river Scamander: he falls upon the latter with great slaughter; takes twelve captives alive, to sacrifice to the shade of Patroclus; and kills Lycaon and Asteropæus. Scamander attacks him with all his waves: Neptune and Pallas assist the heroes; Simois joins Scamander; at length Vulcan, by the instigation of Juno, almost dries up the river. This combat ended, the other gods engage each other. Meanwhile Achilles continues the slaughter, drives the rest into Troy; Agenor only makes a stand, and is convey'd away in a cloud by Apollo: who (to delude Achilles) takes upon him Agenor's shape, and, while he pursues him in that disguise, gives the Trojans an opportunity of retiring into their city.

The same day continues. The scene is on the banks and in the stream of Scamander.

AND now to Xanthus' gliding stream they drove,
Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove;
The river here divides the flying train,
Part to the town fly diverse o'er the plain,
Where late their troops triumphant bore the fight, 5
Now chas'd, and trembling in ignoble flight:
(These with a gather'd mist Saturnia shrouds,
And rolls behind the rout a heap of clouds!)

Part plunge into the stream : old Xanthus roars,
 The flashing billows beat the whiten'd shores : 10
 With cries promiscuous all the banks resound,
 And here, and there, in eddies whirling round,
 The flouncing steeds and shrieking warriors drown'd. }
 As the scorch'd locust from their fields retire,
 While fast behind them runs the blazing fire ; 15
 Driv'n from the land before the smoky cloud,
 The clust'ring legions rush into the flood :
 So plung'd in Xanthus, by Achilles' force,
 Roars the resounding surge with men and horse.
 His bloody lance the hero casts aside, 20
 (Which spreading tam'risks on the margin hide,)
 Then, like a god, the rapid billows braves,
 Arm'd with his sword, high-brandish'd o'er the waves;
 Now down he plunges, now he whirls it round,
 Deep groan'd the waters with the dying sound ; 25
 Repeated wounds the red'ning river dy'd,
 And the warm purple circled on the tide.
 Swift thro' the foamy flood the Trojans fly,
 And close in rocks or winding caverns lie.
 So the huge dolphin tempesting the main, 30
 In shoals before him fly the scaly train;
 Confus'dly heap'd they seek their inmost caves,
 Or pant and heave beneath the floating waves.
 Now tir'd with slaughter, from the Trojan band
 Twelve chosen youths he drags alive to land ; 35
 With their rich belts their captive arms constrains,
 (Late their proud ornaments, but now their chains.)
 These his attendants to the ships convey'd,
 Sad victims ! destin'd to Patroclus' shade.
 Then, as once more he plung'd amid the flood, 40
 The young Lycaon in his passage stood ;
 The son of Priam, whom the hero's hand,
 But late made captive in his father's land,
 (As from a sycamore, his sounding steel
 Lopp'd the green arms to spoke a chariot-wheel,) 45
 To Lemnon's isle he sold the royal slave,
 Where Jason's son the price demanded gave ;
 But kind Eetion touching on the shore,
 The ransom'd prince to fair Arisbe bore,

Ten days were past, since in his father's reign, 50

He felt the sweets of liberty again ;

The next, that god whom men in vain withstand,

Gives the same youth to the same conqu'ring hand ;

Now never to return ! and doom'd to go

A sadder journey to the shades below. 55

His well-known face when great Achilles ey'd,

(The helm and visor he had cast aside

With wild affright, and dropp'd upon the field

His useless lance and unavailing shield,)

As trembling, panting, from the stream he fled, 60

And knock'd his fault'ring knees, the hero said.

Ye mighty gods ! what wonders strike my view !

Is it in vain our conqu'ring arms subdue ?

Sure I shall see yon heaps of Trojans kill'd,

Rise from the shades, and brave me on the field : 65

As now the captive, whom so late I bound

And sold to Lemnos, stalks on Trojan ground !

Not him the sea's unmeasur'd deeps detain,

'That bar such numbers from their native plain :

Lo ! he returns. Try then, my flying spear ! 70

Try, if the grave can hold the wanderer ;

If earth at length this active prince can seize,

Earth, whose strong grasp has held down Hercules.

Thus while he spake, the Trojan pale with fears,

Approach'd, and sought his knees with suppliant tears :

Loth as he was to yield his youthful breath, 76

And his soul shiv'ring at th' approach of death.

Achilles rais'd the spear, prepar'd to wound,

He kiss'd his feet, extended on the ground :

And while above the spear suspended stood, 80

Longing to dip its thirsty point in blood,

One had embrac'd them close, one stopt the dart,

While thus these melting words attempt his heart.

Thy well-known-captive great Achilles ! see,

Once more Lycaon trembles at thy knee. 85

Some pity to a suppliant's name afford,

Who shar'd the gifts of Ceres at thy board ;

Whom late thy conqu'ring arm to Lemnos bore,

Far from his father, friends, and native shore ;

A hundred oxen were his price that day, 90

Now sums immense thy mercy shall repay,

Scarce respited from woes I yet appear,
 And scarce twelve morning suns have seen me hear;
 Lo! Jove again submits me to thy hands,
 Again, her victim cruel fate demands! 95
 I sprung from Priam, and Laothoe fair,
 (Old Alte's daughter, and Lelegia's heir;
 Who held in Pedasus his fam'd abode,
 And rul'd the fields where silver Satnio flow'd;)

Two sons (alas! unhappy sons) she bore; 100 }
 For ah! one spear shall drink each brother's gore,
 And I succeed to slaughter'd Polydore. }
 How from that arm of terror shall I fly?
 Some dæmon urges! 'tis my doom to die!
 If ever yet soft pity touch'd thy mind, 105
 Ah! think not me too much of Hector's kind!
 Not the same mother gave thy suppliant breath,
 With his, who wrought thy lov'd Patroclus' death.
 These words, attended with a show'r of tears,
 The youth address to unrelenting ears: 110
 Talk not of life, or ransom (he replies,)
 Patroclus dead, whoever meets me, dies:
 In vain a single I'rojan sues for grace;
 But least, the sons of Priam's hateful race.
 Die then, my friend! what boots it to deplore? 115
 The great, the good Patroclus is no more!
 He, far thy better, was foredoom'd to die,
 ' And thou, dost thou, bewail mortality?'
 Seest thou not me, whom nature's gifts adorn,
 Sprung from a hero, from a goddess born; 120
 The day shall come (which nothing can avert)
 When by the spear, the arrow, or the dart,
 By night, or day, by force, or by design,
 Impending death and certain fate are mine.
 Die then—He said; and, as the word he spoke, 125
 The fainting stripling sunk before the stroke:
 His hand forgot its grasp, and left the spear,
 While all his trembling frame confest his fear.
 Sudden, Achilles his broad sword display'd,
 And buried in his neck the reeking blade. 130
 Prone fell the youth; and panting on the land,
 The gushing purple dy'd the thirsty sand:

The victor to the stream the carcase gave,
And thus insults him, floating on the wave.

135

Lie there, Lycaon ! let the fish surround
Thy blotted corse, and suck thy gory wound:
There no sad mother shall thy fun'rals weep,
But swift Scamander roll thee to the deep,
Whose ev'ry wave some wat'ry monster brings,
To feast unpunish'd on the fat of kings.

140

So perish Troy, and all the Trojan line !

Such ruin theirs, and such compassion mine.

What boots ye now Scamander's worshipp'd stream,

His earthly honours, and immortal name !

In vain your immolated bulls are slain,

145

Your living coursers glut his gulfs in vain ;

Thus he rewards you, with this bitter fate ;

Thus, till the Grecian vengeance be complete ;

Thus is aton'd Patroclus' honour'd shade,

And the short absence of Achilles paid.

150

These boastful words provoke the raging god,

With fury swells the violated flood.

What means divine may yet the pow'r employ,

To check Achilles, and to rescue Troy ?

Meanwhile the hero springs, in arms to dare

155

The great Asteropæus to mortal war ;

The son of Pelagon, whose lofty line

Flows from the source of Axius, stream divine !

(Fair Peribœa's love the god had crown'd,

With all his reflux waters circled round ;)

160

On him Achilles rush'd: he fearless stood,

And shook two spears, advancing from the flood ;

The flood impell'd him, on Pefides' head

T' avenge his waters, choak'd with heaps of dead.

Near as they drew, Achilles thus began.

165

What art thou, boldest of the race of man ?

Who, or from whence ? Unhappy is the sire,

Whose son encounters our resistless ire.

O son of Peleus ! what avails to trace

(Reply'd the warrior) our illustrious race ?

170

From rich Pæonia's vallies I command,

Arm'd with protended spears my native band ;

Now shines the tenth bright morning since I came

In aid of Ilion to the fields of fame ;

Axius, who swells with all the neighb'ring rills, 175
 And wide around the floated region fills,
 Begot my sire, whose spear such glory won :
 Now lift thy arm, and try that hero's son !
 Threat'ning he said : the hostile chiefs advance ;
 At once Asteropeus discharg'd each lance, 180
 (For both his dex'trous hands the lance could wield,)
 One struck, but pierc'd not the Vulcanian shield,
 One raz'd Achilles' hand ; the spouting blood
 Spun forth, in earth the fasten'd weapon stood.
 Like lightning next the Pelian jav'lin flies : 185
 Its erring fury hiss'd along the skies :
 Deep in the swelling bank was driv'n the spear,
 Ev'n to the middle earth'd ; and quiver'd there.
 Then from his side the sword Pelides drew,
 And on his foe with doubled fury flew, 190
 The foe thrice tugg'd, and shook the rooted wood ;
 Repulsive of his might the weapon stood :
 The fourth, he tries to break the spear in vain ;
 Bent as he stands, he tumbles to the plain ;
 His belly open'd with a ghastly wound, 195
 The reaking entrails pour upon the ground.
 Beneath the hero's feet he panting lies,
 And his eye darkens, and his spirit flies :
 While the proud victor thus triumphing said,
 His radiant armour tearing from the dead ; 200
 So ends thy glory ! such the fate they prove,
 Who strive presumptuous with the sons of Jove.
 Sprung from a river didst thou boast thy line,
 But great Saturnius is the source of mine.
 How durst thou vaunt thy wat'ry progeny ! 205
 Of Peleus, Æacus, and Jove, am I ;
 The race of these superior far to those,
 As he that thunders to the stream that flows.
 What rivers can Scamander might have shown,
 But Jove he dreads, nor wars against his son. 210
 Ev'n Achelous might contend in vain,
 And all the roaring billows of the main.
 Th' eternal ocean, from whose fountains flow
 The seas, the rivers, and the springs below,
 The thund'ring voice of Jove abhors to hear, 215
 And in his deep abysses shakes with fear.

He said : then from the bank his jav'lin tore,
And left the breathless warrior in his gore.
The floating tides the bloody carcase lave,
And beat against it, wave succeeding wave ; 220
Till roll'd between the banks, it lies the food
Of curling eels, and fishes of the flood.
All scatter'd round the stream, (their mightiest slain,)
The amaz'd Pæonians scour along the plain :
He vents his fury on the flying crew, 225
Thrasius, Astypylus, and Mnesus slew ;
Mydon, Thersilochus, with Ænius fell,
And numbers more his lance had plung'd to hell ;
But from the bottom of his gulfs profound,
Scamander spoke ; the shores return'd the sound. 230

O first of mortals ! (for the gods are thine,)
In valour matchless, and in force divine !
If Jove have giv'n thee ev'ry Trojan head,
'Tis not on me thy rage should heap the dead.
See! my choak'd streams no more their course can keep,
Nor roll their wonted tribute to the deep, 236
Turn then, impetuous! from our injur'd flood :
Content, thy slaughters could amaze a god.

In human form confess'd, before his eyes,
The river thus ; and thus the chief replies. 240
O sacred stream ! thy word we shall obey,
But not till Troy the destin'd vengeance pay,
Not till within her tow'rs the perjur'd train
Shall pant, and tremble at our arms again ;
Not till proud Hector, guardian of her wall, 245
Or stain this lance, or see Achilles fall.

He said ; and drove with fury on the foe.
Then to the godhead of the silver bow
The yellow flood began : O son of Jove !
Was not the mandate of the sire above 250
Full and express ? that Phœbus should employ
His sacred arrows in defence of Troy,
And make her conquer, till Hyperion's fall
In awful darkness hide the face of all ?

He spoke in vain—The chief without dismay 255
Ploughs thro' the boiling surge his desp'rate way.
Then rising in his rage above the shores,
From all his deep the bellowing rivers roars,

Huge heaps of slain disgorges on the coast,
 And round the banks the ghastly dead are tost. 260
 While all before, the billows rang'd on high,
 (A watry bulwark,) skreen the bands who fly.
 Now bursting on his head with thund'ring sound,
 The falling deluge whelms the hero round :
 His loaded shield bends to the rushing tide : 265
 His feet upborne, scarce the strong flood divide,
 Slidd'ring, and stagg'ring. On the border stood
 A spreading elm, that overhung the flood ;
 He seiz'd a bending bough, his steps to stay,
 The plant uprooted to his weight gave way, 270
 Heaving the bank, and undermining all,
 Loud flash the waters to the rushing fall
 Of the thick foilage. The large trunk display'd
 Bridg'd the rough flood across : the hero stay'd
 On this his weight, and rais'd upon his hand, 275
 Leap'd from the channel, and regain'd the land.
 Then blacken'd the wild waves, the murmur rose,
 The god pursues, a huger billow throws.
 And bursts the bank, ambitious to destroy,
 The man whose fury is the fate of Troy. 280
 He, like the warlike eagle, speeds his pace,
 (Swiftest and strongest of th' aerial race,)
 Far as a spear can fly, Achilles springs
 At ev'ry bound ; his clanging armour rings :
 Now here, now there, he turns on ev'ry side, 285
 And winds his course before the following tide ;
 The waves flow after, wheresoe'er he wheels,
 And gather fast, and murmur at his heels.
 So when a peasant to his garden brings
 Soft rills of water from the bubbling springs, 290
 And calls the floods from high, to bless his bow'rs,
 And feed with pregnant streams the plants and flow'rs ?
 Soon as he clears whate'er their passage staid,
 And marks the future current with his spade,
 Swift o'er the rolling pebbles, down the hills 295
 Louder and louder purl the falling rills,
 Before him scatt'ring, they prevent his pains,
 And shine in mazy wand'rings o'er the plains.
 Still flies Achilles, but, before his eyes,
 Still swift Scamander rolls where'er he flies: 300

Not all his speed escapes the rapid floods;
 The first of men, but not a match for gods.
 Oft as he turn'd the torrent to oppose,
 And bravely try if all the pow'rs were foes;
 So oft the surge, in watry mountains spread, 305
 Beats on his back, or bursts upon his head.
 Yet dauntless still the adverse flood he braves,
 And still indignant bounds above the waves.
 Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil;
 Wash'd from beneath him slides the slimy soil; 310
 When thus, (his eyes on heav'n's expansion thrown,)
 Forth bursts the hero with an angry groan.

Is there no god Achilles to befriend?
 No pow'r t' avert his miserable end?
 Prevent, oh Jove! this ignominious date, 315
 And make my future life the sport of fate.
 Of all heav'n's oracles believ'd in vain,
 But most of Thetis, must her son complain;
 By Phœbus' darts she prophesy'd my fall,
 In glorious arms before the Trojan wall. 320
 Oh! had I dy'd in fields of battle warm,
 Stretch'd like a hero, by a hero's arm!
 Might Hector's spear this dauntless bosom rend,
 And my swift soul o'ertake my slaughter'd friend!
 Ah no! Achilles meets a shameful fate; 325
 Oh how unworthy of the brave and great!
 Like some vile swain, whom, on a rainy day,
 Crossing a ford, the torrent sweeps away,
 An unregarded carcase to the sea. }

Neptune and Pallas haste to his relief, 330
 And thus in human form address the chief:
 The pow'r of Ocean first. Forbear thy fear,
 Oh son of Peleus! Lo thy gods appear!
 Behold! from Jove descending to thy aid,
 Propitious Neptune, and the blue-ey'd maid. 335
 Stay, and the furious flood shall cease to rave:
 'Tis not thy fate to glut his angry wave.
 But thou the counsel heav'n suggests attend!
 Nor breath from combat, nor thy sword suspend,
 Till Troy receive her flying sons, till all 340
 Her routed squadrons pant behind their wall:

Hector alone shall stand his fatal chance ;
And Hector's blood shall smoke upon thy lance.
Thine is the glory doom'd. Thus spoke the gods :
Then swift ascended to the bright abodes. 345

Stung with new ardour, thus by heav'n impell'd,
He springs impetuous, and invades the field :
O'er all the expanded plain the waters spread,
Heav'd on the bounding billows danc'd the dead,
Floating 'midst scatter'd arms ; while casques of gold,
And turn'd up bucklers, glitter'd as they roll'd. 351
High o'er the surging tide, by leaps and bounds,
He wades and mounts ; the parted wave resounds.
Not a whole river stops the hero's course,
While Pallas fills him with immortal force. 355
With equal rage, indignant Xanthus roars,
And lifts his billows, and o'erwhelms his shores.

Then thus to Simois: Haste, my brother flood,
And check this mortal that controuls a god.
Our bravest heroes else shall quit the fight, 360
And Ilion tumble from her tow'ry height.
Call then the subject streams, and bid them roar,
From all thy fountains swell thy watry store,
With broken rocks, and with a load of dead
Charge the black surge, and pour it on his head. 365
Mark how resistless thro' the floods he goes,
And boldly bids the warring gods be foes !
But not that force, nor form divine to fight,
Shall aught avail him, if our rage unite :
Whelm'd under our dark gulfs those arms shall lie, 370
That blaze so dreadful in each Trojan eye ;
And deep beneath a sandy mountain hurl'd,
Immers'd remain this terror of the world.
Such pond'rous ruin shall confound the place,
No Greek shall e'er his perish'd relics grace : 375
No hand his bones shall gather, or inhume,
These his cold rites, and this his watry tomb.

He said : and on the chief descends amain,
Increas'd with gore, and swelling with the slain.
Then, murmur'ing from his beds, he boils, he raves,
And a foam whitens on the purple waves : 381
At ev'ry step, before Achilles stood
The crimson surge, and delug'd him with blood.

Fear touch'd the queen of heav'n : she saw dismay'd,
She call'd aloud, and summon'd Vulcan's aid. 385

Rise to the war ! th' insulting flood requires
Thy wasteful arm : assemble all thy fires !
While to their aid, by our command enjoin'd,
Rush the swift eastern and the western wind :
These from old Ocean at my word shall blow, 390
Pour the red torrent on the wat'ry foe,
Corsets and arms to one bright ruin turn,
And hissing rivers to their bottoms burn.
Go, mighty in thy rage, display thy pow'r,
Drink the whole flood, the crackling trees devour, 395
Scorch all the banks ! and, (till our voice reclaim,)
Exert th' unwear'd furies of the flame ?

The pow'r ignipotent her word obeys :
Wide o'er the plain, he pours the boundless blaze ?
At once consumes the dead, and dries the soil : 400
And the shrunk waters in their channel boil :
As when autumnal Boreas sweeps the sky,
And instant blows the water'd gardens dry :
So look'd the field, so whiten'd was the ground,
While Vulcan breath'd the fiery blast around. 405
Swift on the sedgy reeds the ruin preys ;
Along the margin winds the running blaze :
The trees in flaming rows to ashes turn,
The flow'ry lotos, and the tam'risk, burn.
Broad elm, and cypress rising in a spire, 410
The wat'ry willows hiss before the fire.

Now glow the waves, and fishes pant for breath,
The eels lie twisting in the pangs of death :
Now flounce aloft, now drive the scaly fry,
Or, gasping, turn their bellies to the sky. 415
At length the river rear'd his languid head,
And thus, short-panting, to the god he said.

Oh Vulcan ! oh ! what pow'r resists thy might !
I faint, I sink, unequal to the fight —
I yield—Let Ilion fall ; if fate decree— 420
Ah—bend no more thy fiery arms on me !

He ceas'd ; wide conflagration blazing round ;
The bubbling waters yield a hissing sound.
As when the flames beneath a caldron rise,
To melt the fat of some rich sacrifice, 425

Amid the fierce embrace of circling fires,
The waters foam, the heavy smoke aspires.
So boils th' imprison'd flood, forbid to flow,
And choak'd with vapours, feels his bottom glow.
To Juno, then, imperial queen of air, 430
The burning river sends his earnest pray'r.

Ah why, Saturnia! must thy son engage
Me, only me, with all his wasteful rage!
On other gods his dreadful arm employ,
For mightier gods assert the cause of Troy. 435
Submissive I desist, if thou command,
But ah! withdraw this all-destroying hand.
Hear then my solemn oath, to yield to fate
Unaided Ilium, and her destin'd state,
Till Greece shall gird her with destructive flame, 440
And in one ruin sink the Trojan name.

His warm entreaty touch'd Saturnia's ear:
She bade the ignipotent his rage forbear,
Recal the flame, nor, in a mortal cause,
Infest a god: th' obedient flame withdraws: 445
Again; the branching streams began to spread,
And soft re-murmur in their wonted bed.

While these by Juno's will the strife resign,
The warring gods in fierce contention join:
Re-kindling rage each heav'nly breast alarms; 450
With horrid clangor shock'd th' æthereal arms:
Heav'n in loud thunder bids the trumpet sound;
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground.
Jove, as his sport, the dreadful scene describes,
And views contending gods with careless eyes. 455
The pow'r of battles lifts his brazen spear,
And first assaults the radiant queen of war.

What mov'd thy madness, thus to disunite
Æthereal minds, and mix all heav'n in fight?
What wonder this, when, in thy frantic mood, 460
Thou drov'st a mortal to insult a god:
Thy impious hand Tydides' jav'lin bore,
And madly bath'd it in celestial gore.

He spoke, and smote the loud-resounding shield,
Which bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful field; 465
The adamantinæ ægis of her sire,
That turns the glancing bolt, and forked fire.

Then heav'd the goddess in her mighty hand
 A stone, the limit of the neighb'ring land,
 There fix'd from eldest times; black, craggy, vast:
 This at the heav'nly homicide she cast. 471
 Thund'ring he falls; a mass of monstrous size,
 And sev'n broad acres covers as he lies.
 The stunning stroke his stubborn nerves unbound;
 Loud o'er the fields his ringing arms resound: 475
 The scornful dame her conquest views with smiles,
 And, glorying thus, the prostrate god reviles.

Hast thou not yet, insatiate fury! known,
 How far Minerva's force transcends thy own?
 Juno, whom thou rebellious dar'st withstand, 480
 Corrects thy folly thus by Pallas' hand;
 Thus meets thy broken faith with just disgrace,
 And partial aid to Troy's perfidious race.

The goddess spoke, and turn'd her eyes away,
 That, beaming round, diffus'd celestial day. 485

Jove's Cyprian daughter, stooping on the land,
 Lent to the wounded god her tender hand:
 Slowly he rises, scarcely breathes with pain,
 And, propt on her fair arm, forsakes the plain.
 'This the bright empress of the heav'ns survey'd. 490
 And scoffing, thus, to war's victorious maid.
 Lo! what an aid on Mars' side is seen!

'The smiles' and loves' unconquerable queen!
 Mark with what insolence, in open view,
 She moves: let Pallas, if she dares, pursue. 495
 Minerva, smiling, heard, the pair o'ertook,
 And slightly on her breast the wanton struck;
 She, unresisting, fell; (her spirits fled;)

On earth together lay the lovers spread.
 And, like these heroes, be the fate of all, 500

(Minerva cries,) who guard the Trojan wall!
 'To Grecian gods such let the Phrygian be,
 So dread, so fierce, as Venus is to me;
 'Then from the lowest stone shall Troy be mov'd——
 'Thus she, and Juno, with a smile, approv'd. 505

Meantime, to mix in more than mortal fight,
 The god of ocean dares the god of light.
 What sloth has seiz'd us, when the fields around
 Ring with conflicting pow'rs, and heav'n returns the
 sound?

Shall ignominious we, with shame retire, 510
 No deed perform'd, to our Olympian sire ?
 Come, prove thy arm ! for first the war to wage,
 Suits not my greatness, or superior age.
 Rash as thou art to prop the Trojan throne,
 (Forgetful of my wrongs, and of thy own,) 515 }
 And guard the race of proud Laomedon !
 Hast thou forgot, how, at the monarch's pray'r,
 We shar'd the lengthen'd labours of an year !
 'Troy's walls I rais'd, (for such were Jove's commands,)
 And yon proud bulwarks grew beneath my hands : 520
 Thy task it was to feed the bellowing droves
 Along fair Ida's vales and pendant groves.
 But when the circling seasons, in their train,
 Brought back the grateful day that crown'd our pain ;
 With menace stern the fraudulent king defy'd 525
 Our latent godhead, and the prize deny'd :
 Mad as he was, he threaten'd servile bands,
 And doom'd us exiles far in barb'rous lands.
 Incens'd, we heav'nward fled with swiftest wing,
 And destin'd vengeance on the perjur'd king. 530
 Dost thou, for this, afford proud Ilion grace,
 And not, like us, infest the faithless race ?
 Like us, their present future sons destroy,
 And from its deep foundations heave their Troy ?
 Apollo thus : To combat for mankind 535
 Ill suits the wisdom of celestial mind :
 For what is man ? calamitous by birth,
 They owe their life and nourishment to earth ;
 Like yearly leaves, that now with beauty crown'd,
 Smile on the sun ; now, wither on the ground ; 540
 To their own hands commit the frantic scene,
 Nor mix immortals in a cause so mean.
 Then turns his face, far-beaming heav'nly fires,
 And from the senior pow'r submiss retires ;
 Him, thus, retreating, Artemis upbraids, 545
 The quiver'd huntress of the sylvan shades.
 And is it thus the youthful Phœbus flies,
 And yields to ocean's hoary sire the prize ?
 How vain that martial pomp, and dreadful show
 Of pointed arrows, and the silver bow ! 550

Now boast no more in yon celestial bow'r,
Thy force can match the great earth-shaking pow'r.
Silent, he heard the queen of woods upbraid :
Not so Saturnia bore the vaunting maid ;
But furious thus. What insolence has driv'n 555
Thy pride to face the majesty of heav'n ?
What tho' by Jove the female plague design'd,
Fierce to the feeble race of woman-kind,
'The wretched matron feels thy piercing dart ;
'Thy sex's tyrant, with a tyger's heart ? 560
What tho' tremendous in the woodland chase,
Thy certain arrows pierce the savage race ?
How dares thy rashness, on the pow'rs divine,
Employ those arms, or match thy force with mine ?
Learn hence, no more unequal war to wage— 565
She said, and seiz'd her wrists with eager rage :
These in her left hand lock'd, her right unty'd
The bow, the quiver, and its plummy pride.
About her temples flies the busy bow :
Now here, now there, she winds her from the blow :
The scatt'ring arrows rattle from the case, 570
Drop round, and idly mark the dusty place.
Swift from the field the baffled huntress flies,
And scarce restrains the torrent in her eyes :
So, when the falcon wings her way above, 575
To the clift cavern speeds the gentle dove,
(Not fated yet to die,) there safe retreats,
Yet still her heart against the marble beats.
To her Latona hastes with tender care ;
Whom Hermes viewing, thus declines the war. 580
How shall I face the dame, who gives delight
To him whose thunders blacken heav'n with night ?
Go, matchless goddess ! triumph in the skies,
And boast my conquest, while I yield the prize.
He spoke ! and past : Latona, stooping low, 585
Collects the scatter'd shafts, and fallen bow,
That glitt'ring on the dust lay here and there,
Dishonour'd relics of Diana's war.
Then swift pursu'd her to her blest abode,
Where, all confus'd, she sought the sov'reign god ; 590
Weeping, she grasp'd her knees : th' ambrosial vest
Shook with her sighs, and panted on her breast.

The sire superior smil'd; and bade her show
What heav'nly hand had caus'd his daughter's woe?
Abash'd, she names his own imperial spouse : 595
And the pale crescent fades upon her brows.

Thus they above : while, swiftly gliding down,
Apollo enters Ilion's sacred town :
The guardian god now trembled for her wall,
And fear'd the Greeks, tho' fate forbade her fall. 600
Back to Olympus, from the war's alarms,
Return the shining bands of gods in arms ;
Some proud in triumph, some with rage on fire :
And take their thrones around th' æthereal sire.

Thro' blood, thro' death, Achilles still proceeds, 605
O'er slaughter'd heroes, and o'er rolling steeds.
As when avenging flames, with fury driv'n,
On guilty towns exert the wrath of heav'n !
The pale inhabitants, some fall, some fly ;
And the red vapours purple all the sky. 610
So rag'd Achilles : death and dire dismay,
And toils, and terrors, fill'd the dreadful day.

High on a turret hoary Priam stands,
And marks the waste of his destructive hands ;
Views, from his arm, the Trojans scatter'd flight, 615
And the near hero rising on his sight !
No stop, no check, no aid ! with feeble pace,
And settled sorrow on his aged face,
Fast as he could, he sighing quits the walls ;
And thus, descending, on the guards he calls. 620
You to whose care our city gates belong,
Set wide your portals to the flying throng,
For lo ! he comes, with unresisted sway ;
He comes, and desolation marks his way !
But when within the walls our troops take breath, 625
Lock fast the brazen bars, and shut out death.
Thus charg'd the rev'rend monarch : wide were flung
The op'ning folds ; the sounding hinges rung.
Phœbus rush'd forth, the flying bards to meet,
Struck slaughter back, and cover'd the retreat. 630
On heaps the Trojan's crowd to gain the gate,
And gladsome see their last escape from fate :
Thither, all parch'd with thirst, a heartless train,
Hoary with dust, they beat the hollow plain :

And gasping, panting, fainting, labour on 635
 With heavier strides, that lengthen'd tow'rd the town.
 Enrag'd Achilles follows with his spear;
 Wild with revenge, insatiable of war.

Then had the Greeks eternal praise acquir'd,
 And Troy inglorious, to her walls retir'd; 640
 But he*, the god, who darts ætherial flame,
 Shot down to save her, and redeem her fame.

To young Agenor force divine he gave,
 (Antenor's offspring, haughty, bold and brave,) 645
 In aid of him, beside the beech he sat,
 And, wrapt in clouds, restrain'd the hand of fate.

When now the gen'rous youth Achilles spies,
 Thick beats his heart, the troubled motions rise,
 (So, ere a storm, the waters heave and roll,) 650
 He stops, and questions thus his mighty soul.

What, shall I fly this terror of the plain?
 Like others fly, and be like others slain?
 Vain hope! to shun him by the self-same road,
 Yon line of slaughter'd Trojans lately trode. 655

No: with the common heap I scorn to fall —
 What if they pass'd me to the Trojan wall,
 While I decline to yonder path, that leads
 To Ida's forests, and surrounding shades?

So may I reach, conceal'd, the cooling flood,
 From my tir'd body wash the dust and blood, 660
 As soon as night her dusky veil extends.
 Return in safety to my Trojan friends.

What if—But wherefore all this vain debate?
 Stand I to doubt within the reach of fate?
 Ev'n now, perhaps, ere yet I turn the wall, 665
 The fierce Achilles sees me and I fall:

Such is his swiftness, 'tis in vain to fly,
 And such his valour, that who stands must die,
 Howe'er, 'tis better fighting for the state,
 Here, and in public view, to meet my fate. 670

Yet sure he too is mortal; he may feel;
 (Like all the sons of earth,) the force of steel;
 One only soul informs that dreadful frame;
 And Jove's sole favour gives him all his fame,

* Apollo.

He said, and stood, collected in his might ; 675
And all his beating bosom claim'd the fight.
So from some deep-grown wood a panther starts,
Rous'd from his thicket by a storm of darts !
Untaught to fear or fly, he hears the sounds
Of shouting hunters, and of clam'rous hounds ; 680
Tho' struck, tho' wounded, scarce perceives the pain,
And the barb'd jav'lin stings his breast in vain ;
On their whole war, untam'd, the savage flies ;
And tears his hunter, or beneath him dies.
Not less resolv'd, Antenor's valiant heir 685
Confronts Achilles and awaits the war,
Disdainful of retreat : high held before,
His shield (a broad circumference) he bore ;
Then graceful as he stood, in act to throw
The lifted jav'lin, thus bespoke the foe. 690
How proud Achilles glories in his fame !
And hopes, this day, to sink the Trojan name
Beneath her ruins ! know that hope is vain ;
A thousand woes a thousand toils remain.
Parents and children our just arms employ, 695
And strong, and many, are the sons of Troy.
Great as thou art, ev'n thou may'st stain with gore
These Phrygian fields, and press a foreign shore.
He said ; with matchless force the jav'lin slung
Smote on his knee : the hollow cuishes rung, 700
Beneath the pointed steel : but, safe from harms,
He stands impassive in th' ætherial arms.
Then, fiercely rushing on the daring foe,
His lifted arm prepares the fatal blow..
But, jealous of his fame, Apollo shrouds 705
The godlike Trojan in a veil of clouds :
Safe from pursuit, and shut from mortal view,
Dismiss'd with fame, the favour'd youth withdrew.
Meanwhile the god, to cover their escape,
Assumes Agenor's habit, voice, and shape, 710
Flies from the furious chief in this disguise,
The furious chief still follows where he flies :
Now o'er the fields they stretch with lengthen'd strides,
Now urge the course where swift Scamander glides :
The god now distant scarce a stride before, 715
Tempts his pursuit, and wheels about the shore :

While all the flying troops their speed employ,
And pour on heaps into the walls of Troy.
No stop, no stay; no thought to ask, or tell,
Who 'scap'd by flight, or who by battle fell.
'Twas tumult all, and violence of flight;
And sudden joy confus'd, and mix'd affright;
Pale Troy against Achilles shuts her gate;
And nations breathe, deliver'd from their fate.

720

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XXII.

The Argument.

The death of Hector.

THE Trojans being safe within the walls, Hector only stays to oppose Achilles. Priam is struck at his approach, and tries to persuade his son to re-enter the town. Hecuba joins her intreaties, but in vain. Hector consults within himself what measures to take; but at the advance of Achilles, his resolution fails him, and he flies; Achilles pursues him thrice round the walls of Troy. The gods debate concerning the fate of Hector; at length Minerva descends to the aid of Achilles. She deludes Hector in the shape of Deiphobus: he stands the combat, and is slain. Achilles drags the dead body at his chariot, in the sight of Priam and Hecuba. Their lamentations, tears, despair. Their cries reach the ears of Andromache, who, ignorant of this, was retired into the inner part of the palace: She mounts up to the walls, and beholds her dead husband. She swoons at the spectacle. Her excess of grief and lamentation.

The thirtieth day still continues. The scene lies under the walls and on the battlements of Troy.

THUS to their bulwarks, smit with panic fear,
The herded Ilians rush like driven deer;
There safe, they wipe the briny drops away.
And drown in bowls the labours of the day.

Close to the walls advancing o'er the fields, 5
Beneath one roof of well compacted shields,
March bending on, the Greeks embody'd pow'rs,
Far stretching in the shade of Trojan tow'rs.
Great Hector singly stay'd; chain'd down by fate,
There fix'd he stood before the Scæan gate; 10
Still his bold arms determin'd to employ,
The guardian still of long defended Troy.
Apollo now to tir'd Achilles turns;
(The pow'r confest in all his glory burns);
And what (he cries) has Peleus son in view, 15
With mortal speed a godhead to pursue?
For not to thee to know the gods is giv'n,
Unskill'd to trace the latent marks of heav'n.
What boots thee now, that Troy forsook the plain?
Vain thy past labour, and thy present vain! 20
Safe in their walls are now her troops bestow'd,
While here thy frantic rage attacks a god.
The chief incens'd—Too partial god of day!
To check my conquests in the middle way:
How few in Ilion else had refuge found? 25
What gasping numbers now had bit the ground?
Thou robb'st me of a glory justly mine,
Pow'rful of Godhead, and of fraud divine:
Mean fame, alas! for one of heav'nly strain,
To cheat a mortal who repines in vain. 30
Then to the city terrible and strong.
With high and haughty steps he tow'rd along.
So the proud courser, victor of the prize,
To the near goal with double ardour flies.
Him as he blazing shot across the field, 35
The careful eyes of Priam first beheld.
Not half so dreadful rises to the sight,
'Thro' the thick gloom of some tempestuous night,
Orion's dog, (the year when Autumn weighs),
And o'er the feeble stars exerts his rays; 40
Terrific glory! for his burning breath
'Taints the red air with fevers, plagues and death.
So flam'd his fiery mail. Then wept the sage;
He strikes his rev'rend head, now white with age:
He lifts his wither'd arms: obtests the skies; 45
He call his much-lov'd son with feeble cries:

The son resolv'd Achilles' force to dare,
 Full at the Scæan gate expects the war :
 While the sad father on the ramparts stands,
 And thus adjures him with extended hands. 50
 Ah, stay not, stay not ! guardless and alone,
 Hector ! my lov'd, my dearest, bravest son !
 Methinks already I behold thee slain,
 And stretch'd beneath that fury of the plain,
 Implacable Achilles ! might'st thou be 55
 To all the gods no dearer than to me !
 Thee, vultures wild should scatter round the shore,
 And bloody dogs grow fiercer from thy gore.
 How many valiant sons I late enjoy'd,
 Valiant in vain ! by thy curst arm destroy'd : 60
 Or, worse than slaughter'd sold in distant isles
 To shameful bondage, and unworthy toils.
 Two, while I speak, my eyes in vain explore,
 Two from one mother sprung, my Polydore,
 And lov'd Lycaon ; now perhaps no more ! 65 }
 Oh ! if in yonder hostile camp they live,
 What heaps of gold, what treasures would I give ?
 (Their grandsires wealth, by right of birth their own,
 Consign'd his daughter, with Lelegia's throne) ;
 But if (which heav'n forbid) already lost, 70
 All pale they wander on the Stygian coast ;
 What sorrows then must their sad mother know,
 What anguish I, unutterable woe !
 Yet less that anguish, less to her, to me,
 Less to all Troy, if not depriv'd of thee. 75
 Yet shun Achilles ! enter yet the wall ;
 And spare thyself, thy father, spare us all !
 Save thy dear life ; or, if a soul so brave
 Neglect that thought, thy dearer glory save.
 Pity, while yet I live, these silver hairs ; 80
 While yet thy father feels the woes he bears,
 Yet curst with sense ! a wretch whom in his rage
 (All trembling on the verge of helpless age)
 Great Jove has plac'd sad spectacle of pain !
 The bitter dregs of fortune's cup to drain :
 To fill with scenes of death his closing eyes,
 And number all his days by miseries !

My heroes slain, my bridal bed o'erturn'd,
 My daughters ravish'd, and my city burn'd,
 My bleeding infants dash'd against the floor : 90
 These have I yet to see, perhaps, yet more !
 Perhaps ev'n I, reserv'd by angry fate,
 The last sad relic of my ruin'd state,
 (Dire pomp of sov'reign wretchedness ;) must fall,
 And stain the pavement of my regal hall ; 95
 Where famish'd dogs, late guardians of my door,
 Shall lick their mangled masters spatter'd gore.
 Yet for my sons I thank ye gods ! 'twas well ;
 Well have they perish'd, for in fight they fell.
 Who dies in youth and vigour, dies the best, 100
 Struct thro' with wounds, all honest on the breast,
 But when the fates, in fulness of their rage,
 Spurn the hoar head of unresisting age,
 In dust the rev'rend lineaments deform,
 And pour to dogs the life-blood scarcely warm ! 105
 This, this is misery ! the last, the worst,
 That man can feel ; man, fated to be curs'd !
 He said ; and, acting what no words could say,
 Rent from his head the silver locks away,
 With him the mournful mother bears a part, 110
 Yet all their sorrows turn not Hector's heart ;
 The zone unbrac'd, her bosom she display'd,
 And thus, fast-falling the salt tears, she said.
 Have mercy on me, O my son ! revere
 The words of age : attend a parent's pray'r ! 115
 If ever thee in these fond arms I prest,
 Or still'd thy infant clamours at this breast ;
 Ah do not thus our helpless years forego,
 But, by our walls secur'd repel the foe.
 Against his rage if singly thou proceed, 120
 Should'st thou, (but heav'n avert it!) should'st thou bleed,
 Nor must thy corpse lie honour'd on the bier,
 Nor spouse, nor mother, grace thee with a tear ;
 Far from our pious rites, those dear remains
 Must feast the vultures on the naked plains, 125
 So they, while down their cheeks the torrents roll ;
 But fix'd remains the purpose of his soul :
 Resolv'd he stands, and, with a fiery glance,
 Expects the hero's terrible advance,

So roll'd up in his den, the swelling snake 130
 Beholds the traveller approach the brake ;
 When, fed with noxious herbs, his turgid veins
 Have gather'd half the poisons of the plains ;
 He burns, he stiffens with collected ire,
 And his red eye-balls glare with living fire. 135
 Beneath a turret, on his shield reclin'd,
 He stood, and question'd thus his mighty mind :
 Where lies my way ! to enter in the wall ?
 Honour and shame th' ungen'rous thought recall ;
 Shall proud Polydamus, before the gate, 140
 Proclaim, his counsels are obey'd too late,
 Which timely follow'd but the former night,
 What numbers had been sav'd by Hector's flight ?
 That wise advice rejected with disdain,
 I feel my folly in my people slain. 145
 Methinks my suff'ring country's voice I hear,
 But most, her worthless sons insult my ear,
 On my rash courage charge the chance of war,
 And blame those virtues which they cannot share.
 No—if I e'er return, return I must 150
 Glorious, my country's terror laid in dust :
 Or if I perish, let her see my fall
 In field at least, and fighting for her wall.
 And yet suppose these measures I forego,
 Approach unarm'd, and parley with the foe. 155
 The warrior-shield, the helm, and lance lay down,
 And treat on terms of peace to save the town :
 The wife with-held the treasure ill detain'd,
 (Cause of the war, and grievance of the land,)
 With honourable justice to restore ; 160
 And add half Ilion's yet remaining store,
 Which Troy shall, sworn, produce ; that injur'd Greece
 May share our wealth, and leave our walls in peace.
 But why this thought ? unarm'd if I should go,
 What hope of mercy from this vengeful foe, 165
 But woman-like to fall, and fall without a blow ?
 We greet not here, as man conversing man,
 Met at an oak, or journeying o'er a plain :
 No season now for calm familiar talk,
 Like youths and maidens in an ev'ning walk : 170

War is our business, but to whom is giv'n
To die, or triumph, that determine heav'n !

Thus pond'ring, like a god the Greëk drew nigh:
His dreadful plumage nodded from on high;
The Pelian jav'lin, in his better hand, 175
Shot trembling rays that glitter'd o'er the land;
And on his breast the beamy splendours shone,
Like Jove's own lightning, or the rising sun.

As Hector sees, unusual terrors rise,
Struck by some god, he fears, recedes, and flies. 180
He leaves the gates, he leaves the walls behind,
Achilles follows like the winged wind.

Thus at the panting dove a falcon flies,
(The swiftest racer of the liquid skies,)
Just when he holds, or thinks he holds, his prey, 185
Obliquely wheeling thro' th' ærial way;

With open beak and shrilling cries he springs,
And aims his claws, and shoots upon his wings;
No less fore-right the rapid chase they held,
One urg'd by fury, one by fear impell'd: 190

Now circling round the walls their course maintain,
Where the high watch'd-tow'r overlooks the plain;
Now where the fig-trees spread their umbrage broad.
(A wider compass,) smoke along the road.

Next by Scamander's double source they bound, 195
Where two fam'd fountains burst the parted ground;
This hot thro' scorching clefts is seen to rise,
With exhalations steaming to the skies;

That the green banks in summer's heat o'erflows,
Like chrystal clear, and cold as winter-snows, 200
Each gushing fount a marble cistern fills,
Whose polish'd bed receives the falling rills;

Where Trojan dames (ere yet alarm'd by Greece)
Wash'd their fair garments in the days of peace.
By these they past, one chasing, one in flight, 205
(The mighty fled, pursu'd by stronger might,)

Swift was the course; no vulgar prize they play,
No vulgar victim must reward the day,
(Such as in races crown the speedy strife,)
The prize contended was great Hector's life. 210

As when some hero's fun'rals are decreed,
In grateful honour of the mighty deed;

Where high rewards the vig'rous youth inflame,
(Some golden tripod, or some lovely dame,) 215
The panting coursers swiftly turn the goal,
And with them turns the rais'd spectator's soul.
Thus three times round the Trojan wall they fly;
The gazing gods lean forward from the sky;
To whom, while eager on the chace they look,
The sire of mortals and immortals spoke. 220

Unworthy sight! the man, belov'd of heav'n,
Behold, inglorious, round yon city driv'n!
My heart partakes the gen'rous Hector's pain;
Hector, whose zeal whole hecatombs has slain,
Whose grateful fumes the gods receiv'd with joy, 225
From Ida's summits, and the tow'rs of Troy:
Now see him flying! to his fears resign'd,
And fate, and fierce Achilles, close behind.
Consult, ye pow'rs! ('tis worthy your debate,)
Whether to snatch him from impending fate, 230
Or let him bear, by stern Pelides slain,
(Good as he is,) the lot impos'd on man?

Then Pallas thus: Shall he whose vengeance forms
The forky bolt, and blackens heav'n with storms,
Shall he prolong one Trojan's forfeit breath! 235
A man, a mortal, pre-ordain'd to death!
And will no murmurs fill the courts above?
No gods indignant blame their partial Jove?

Go then, (return'd the sire,) without delay,
Exert thy will: I give the fates their way. 240
Swift at the mandate pleas'd 'Tritonia flies,
And stoops impetuous from the cleaving skies:

As thro' the forest, o'er the vale and lawn,
The well-breath'd beagle drives the flying fawn;
In vain he tries the covert of the brakes, 245
Or deep beneath the trembling thicket shakes;
Sure of the vapour in the tainted dews,
The certain hound his various maze pursues.
Thus step by step, where'er the Trojan wheel'd,
There swift Achilles compass'd round the field. 250
Oft as to reach the Dardan gates he bends,
And hopes th' assistance of his pitying friends,
(Whose show'ring arrows, as he cours'd below,
From the high turrets might oppress the foe,)

So oft Achilles turns him to the plain ;
He eyes the city, but he eyes in vain. 255

As men in slumbers seem, with speedy pace,
One to pursue, and one to lead the chace,
Their sinking limbs the fancy'd course forsake,
Nor this can fly, nor that can overtake. 260
No less the lab'ring heroes pant and strain,
While that but flies, and this pursues in vain.

What god, O muse ! assisted Hector's force,
With fate itself so long to hold the course ?
Phœbus it was ; who, in his latest hour, 265
Endu'd his knees with strength, his neeves with pow'r :
And great Achilles, lest some Greek's advance
Should snatch the glory from his lifted lance,
Sign'd to the troops, to yield his foe the way,
And leave untouch'd the honours of the day. 270

Jove lifts the golden balances, that show
The fates of mortal men, and things below :
Here each contending hero's lot he tries,
And weighs, with equal hand, their destinies.
Low sinks the scale surcharg'd with Hector's fate ; 275
Heavy with death it sinks, and hell receives the weight.

Then Phœbus left him. Fierce Minerva flies
To stern Pelides, and triumphing cries ;
Oh lov'd of Jove ! this day our labours cease,
And conquest blazes with full beams on Greece. 280
Great Hector falls ; that Hector, fam'd so far,
Drunk with renown, insatiable of war,
Falls by thy hand, and mine ; nor force, nor flight
Shall more avail him, nor his god of light.
See, where in vain he supplicates above, 285
Roll'd at the feet of unrelenting Jove ?

Rest here : myself will lead the Trojan on,
And urge to meet the fate he cannot shun.

Her voice divine the chief with joyful mind
Obey'd ; and rested, on his lance reclin'd, 290
While, like Deiphobus, the martial dame,
(Her face, her gesture, and her arms the same,)
In show an aid, by hapless Hector's side
Approach'd, and greets him thus with voice bely'd.

Too long, O Hector ! have I borne the sight 295
Of this distress, and sorrow'd in thy flight ;

It fits us now a noble stand to make,
And here, as brothers, equal fates partake.

Then he, O prince : ally'd in blood and fame,
Dearer than all that own a brother's name ; 300
Of all that Hecuba to Priam bore,
Long try'd, long lov'd ; much lov'd, but honour'd more :
Since you, of all our num'rous race, alone
Defend my life, regardless of your own.

Again the goddess. Much my father's pray'r, 305
And much my mother's, prest me to forbear :
My friends embrac'd my knees, adjur'd my stay,
But stronger love impell'd, and I obey.
Come then, the glorious conflict let us try,
Let the steel sparkle, and the jav'lin fly ; 310
Or let us stretch Achilles on the field,
Or to his arm our bloody trophies yield.

Fraudful she said ; then swiftly march'd before,
The Dardan hero shuns his foe no more
Sternly they meet. The silence Hector broke ; 315
His dreadful plumage nodded as he spoke.

Enough, O son of Peleus ! Troy has view'd
Her walls thrice circled, and her chief pursu'd.
But now some god within me bids me try
Thine, or my fate : I kill thee, or I die. 320

Yet on the verge of battle let us stay,
And for a moment's space suspend the day ;
Let heav'n's high pow'rs be call'd to arbitrate
The just conditions of this stern debate ;
(Eternal witnesses of all below, 325
And faithful guardians of the treasur'd vow !)

To them I swear ; if victor in the strife,
Jove by these hands shall shed thy noble life,
No vile dishonour shall thy corpse pursue ;
Stript of its arms alone, (the conqu'rors due,) 330
The rest to Greece uninjur'd I'll restore :
Now plight thy mutual oath, I ask no more.

Talk not of oaths, (the dreadful chief replies,
While anger flash'd from his disdainful eyes.)
Detested as thou art, and ought to be, 335
Nor oath nor pact Achilles plights with thee ;
Such pacts as lambs and rapin wolves combine,
Such leagues as men and furious lions join,

To such I call the gods ! one constant state
Of lasting rancour and eternal hate : 340
No thought but rage, and never-ceasing strife.
Till death extinguish rage, and thought, and life.
Rouse then thy forces this important hour,
Collect thy soul, and call forth all thy pow'r.
No farther subterfuge, no farther chance ; 345
'Tis Pallas, Pallas gives thee to my lance.
Each Grecian ghost, by thee depriv'd of breath,
Now hovers round, and calls thee to thy death.

He spoke, and lanc'd his jav'lin at the foe ;
But Hector shunn'd the meditated blow : 350
He stoop'd, while o'er his head the flying spear
Sung innocent, and spent its force in air :
Minerva watch'd it falling on the land,
Then drew and gave to great Achilles' hand,
Unseen of Hector, who, elate with joy, 355
Now shakes his lance, and braves the dread of Troy.

The life you boasted to that jav'lin giv'n,
Prince ! you have mist. My fate depends on heav'n.
To thee (presumptuous as thou art) unknown,
Or what must prove my fortune, or thy own. 360
Boasting is but an art, our fears to blind,
And with false terrors sink another's mind.
But know, whatever fate I am to try,
By no dishonest wound shall Hector die ;
I shall not fall a fugitive at least, 365
My soul shall bravely issue from my breast.

But first, try thou my arm ; and may this dart
End all my country's woes, deep buried in thy heart !

The weapon flew, its course unerring held,
Unerring, but the heav'nly shield repell'd 370
The mortal dart resulting with a bound,
From off the ringing orb it struck the ground.
Hector beheld his jav'lin fall in vain,
Nor other lance, nor other hope remain ;
He calls Deiphobus, demands a spear, 375
In vain, for no Deiphobus was there.

All comfortless he stands : then, with a sigh,
'Tis so—Heav'n wills it, and my hour is nigh !
I deem'd Deiphobus had heard my call,
But he, secure, lies guarded in the wall. 380

A god deceiv'd me: Pallas, 'twas thy deed,
 Death, and black fate approach! 'Tis I must bleed.
 No refuge now, no succour from above,
 Great Jove deserts me, and the son of Jove,
 Propitious once, and kind! Then welcome fate! 385
 'Tis true I perish, yet I perish great;
 Yet in a mighty deed I shall expire,
 Let future ages hear it, and admire!

Fierce, at the word, his weighty sword he drew,
 And, all collected, on Achilles flew, 390
 So Jove's bold bird, high balanc'd in the air,
 Stoops from the clouds to truss the quiv'ring hare,
 Nor less Achilles his fierce soul prepares,
 Before his breast the flaming shield he bears,
 Refulgent orb! above his fourfold cone 395
 The gilded horse-hair sparkled in the sun,
 Nodding at ev'ry step: (Vulcanian frame!)
 And, as he mov'd, his figure seem'd on flame.
 As radiant Hesper shines with keener light,
 Far-beaming o'er the silver host of night, 400
 When all the starry train emblaze the sphere:
 So shone the point of great Achilles' spear.
 In his right hand he waves the weapon round,
 Eyes the whole man, and meditates the wound;
 But the rich mail Patroclus lately wore, 405
 Securely cas'd the warrior's body o'er.
 One place at length he spies to let in fate,
 Where, 'twixt the neck and throat, the jointed plate
 Gave entrance; thro' that penetrable part
 Furious he drove the well directed dart: 410
 Nor pierc'd the wind-pipe yet, nor took the pow'r
 Of speech, unhappy! from thy dying hour.
 Prone on the field the bleeding warrior lies,
 While thus, triumphing, stern Achilles cries.
 At last is Hector stretch'd upon the plain, 415
 Who fear'd no vengeance for Patroclus slain:
 Then, prince! you should have fear'd what now you
 Achilles absent was Achilles still; (feel:
 Yet a short space the great avenger stay'd,
 Then low in dust thy strength and glory laid. 420
 Peaceful he sleeps, with all our rites adorn'd,
 For ever honour'd, and for ever mourn'd;

While, cast to all the rage of hostile pow'r;
Thee birds shall mangle, and thee dogs devour.

Then Hector, fainting at the approach of death : 425

By thy own soul ? by those who gave thee breath ?

By all the sacred prevalence of pray'r ;

Ah, leave me not for Grecian dogs to tear !

The common rites of sepulture bestow,

To soothe a father's and a mother's woe ; 430

Let their large gifts procure an urn at least,

And Hector's ashes in his country rest.

No, wretch accurst ; relentless he replies,

(Flames, as he spoke, shot flashing from his eyes,)

Not those who gave me breath should bid me spare,

Nor all the sacred prevalence of pray'r. 436

Could I myself the bloody banquet join !

No—to the dogs that carcase I resign.

Should Troy, to bribe me, bring forth all her store,

And, giving thousands, offer thousands more ; 440

Should Dardan Priam, and his weeping dame,

Drain their whole realm to buy one fun'ral flame,

Their Hector on the pile they should not see,

Nor rob the vultures of one limb of thee.

Then thus the chief his dying accents drew, 445

Thy rage, implacable ! too well I knew ;

The furies that relentless breast have steel'd,

And curst thee with a heart that cannot yield.

Yet think, a day will come, when fate's decree,

And angry gods, shall wreak this wrong on thee ; 450

Phœbus and Paris shall avenge my fate,

And stretch thee here, before the Scæan gate.

He ceas'd. The fates suppress his lab'ring breath,

And his eyes stiffen'd at the hand of death ;

To the dark realm the spirit wings its way, 455

(The manly body left a load of clay,)

And plaintive glides along the dreary coast,

A naked, wand'ring, melancholy ghost !

Achilles, musing as he roll'd his eyes

O'er the dead hero, thus (unheard) replies. 460

Die thou the first ! When Jove and heav'n ordain,

I follow thee—He said, and stripp'd the slain.

Then forcing backward from the gaping wound

The reeking jav'lin, cast it on the ground ;

The thronging Greeks behold with wond'ring eyes 465
 His manly beauty, and superior size :
 While some ignobler the great dead deface,
 With wounds ungen'rous, or with taunts disgrace.
 'How chang'd that Hector ! who, like Jove of late,
 'Sent lightning on our fleets, and scatter'd fate ?'
 High o'er the slain the great Achilles stands, 471
 Begirt with heroes, and surrounding bands ;
 And thus aloud, while all the host attends.
 Princes and leaders ! countrymen and friends !
 Since now at length the pow'rful will of heav'n 475
 The dire destroyer to our arm has giv'n,
 Is not Troy fall'n already ? Haste, ye pow'rs !
 See, if already their deserted tow'rs
 Are left unmann'd ; or if they yet retain
 The souls of heroes, their great Hector slain ! 480
 But what is Troy, or glory what to me ?
 Or why reflects my mind to aught but thee,
 Divine Patroclus ! death has seal'd his eyes ;
 Unwept, unhonour'd, uninterr'd he lies ?
 Can his dear image from my soul depart, 485
 Long as the vital spirit moves my heart ?
 If, in the melancholy shades below,
 The flames of friends and lovers cease to glow,
 Yet mine shall sacred last ; mine, undecay'd,
 Burn on thro' death, and animate my shade. 490
 Meanwhile, ye sons of Greece, in triumph bring
 The corpse of Hector, and your Pæans sing.
 Be this the song, slow-moving tow'rd the shore,
 'Hector is dead, and Ilion is no more.'
 'Then his fell soul a thought of vengeance bred, 495
 (Unworthy of himself, and of the dead,)
 'The nervous ancles bor'd, his feet he bound
 With thongs inserted thro' the double wound :
 'These fix'd up high behind the rolling wain,
 His graceful head was trail'd along the plain. 500
 Proud on his car th' insulting victor stood,
 And bore aloft his arms, distilling blood.
 He smites the stèeds ; the rapid chariot flies,
 The sudden clouds of circling dust arise.
 Now lost is all that formidable air ; 505
 'The face divine, and long-descending hair,

Purple the ground, and streak the sable sand ;
 Deform'd, dishonour'd, in his native land !
 Giv'n to the rage of an insulting throng !
 And, in his parent's sight, now dragg'd along ! 510
 The mother first beheld with sad survey ;
 She rent her tresses, venerably grey,
 And cast, far off, the regal veils away. }
 With piercing shrieks his bitter fate she moans,
 While the sad father answers groans with groans, 515
 Tears after tears his mournful cheeks o'erflow,
 And the whole city wears one face of woe.
 No less than if the rage of hostile fires,
 From her foundations curling to her spires,
 O'er the proud citadel at length should rise, 520
 And the last blaze send Ilion to the skies.
 The wretched monarch of the falling state,
 Distracted, presses to the Dardan gate.
 Scarce the whole people stop his desp'rate course,
 While strong affliction gives the feeble force : 525
 Grief tears his heart, and drives him to and fro,
 In all the raging impotence of woe.
 At length he roll'd in dust, and thus began,
 Imploring all, and naming one by one.
 Ah ! let me, let me go where sorrow calls ; 530
 I, only I, will issue from your walls,
 (Guide or companion, friends ! I ask ye none,)
 And bow before the murd'rer of my son.
 My grief perhaps his pity may engage ;
 Perhaps at least he may respect my age. 535
 He has a father too ; a man like me :
 One, not exempt from age and misery,
 (Vig'rous no more, as when his young embrace
 Begot this pest of me, and all my race.)
 How many valiant sons, in early bloom 540
 Has that curst hand sent headlong to the tomb !
 Thee, Hector ! last : thy loss (divinely brave)
 Sinks my sad soul with sorrow to the grave.
 Oh had thy gentle spirit past in peace,
 The son expiring in the sire's embrace, 545
 While both thy parents wept the fatal hour,
 And, bending o'er thee, mix'd the tender show'r !

Some comfort that had been, some sad relief,
To melt in full satiety of grief?

Thus wail'd the father, grov'ling on the ground,
And all the eyes of Ilion stream'd around. 551

Amidst her matrons Hecuba appears,
(A mourning princess and a train in tears;)
Ah, why has heav'n prolong'd this hated breath.
Patient of horrors, to behold thy death? 555

Oh Hector! late thy parents pride and joy,
'The boast of nations! the defence of Troy!
'To whom her safety and her fame she ow'd,
Her chief, her hero, and almost her god;
O fatal change! become in one sad day 560
A senseless corse! inanimated clay!

But not as yet the fatal news had spread
To fair Andromache, of Hector dead;
As yet no messenger had told his fate,
Nor ev'n his stay without the Scæan gate. 565

Far in the close recesses of the dome,
Pensive she play'd the melancholy loom;
A growing work employ'd her secret hours,
Confus'dly gay with intermingled flow'rs.
Her fair-hair'd handmaids heat the brazen urn, 570
The bath preparing for her lord's return:

In vain: alas! her lord returns no more!
Unbath'd he lies, and bleeds along the shore!
Now from the walls the clamours reach her ear,
And all her members shake with sudden fear; 575
Forth from her iv'ry hand the shuttle falls,
As thus, astonish'd, to her maids she calls,

Ah, follow me! (she cry'd, what plaintive noise
Invades my ear! 'Tis sure my mother's voice.
My fault'ring knees their trembling frame desert, 580
A pulse unusual flutters at my heart.

Some strange disaster, some reverse of fate,
(Ye gods avert it! threats the Trojan state.
Far be the omen which my thoughts suggest.
But much I fear my Hector's dauntless breast 585
Confronts Achilles; chas'd along the plain,
Shut from our walls! I fear, I fear him slain?
Safe in the crowd he ever scorn'd to wait,
And sought for glory in the jaws of fate:

Perhaps that noble heat has cost his breath, 590
Now quench'd for ever in the arms of death.

She spoke ; and furious, with distracted pace,
Fears in her heart, and anguish in her face,
Flies thro' the dome, (the maids her steps pursue,)
And mounts the walls, and sends around her view. 595
Too soon her eyes the killing object found,
The godlike Hector dragg'd along the ground.

A sudden darkness shades her swimming eyes :
She faints, she falls ! her breath, her colour flies.
Her hair's fair ornaments, the braids that bound, 600
The net that held them, and the wreath that crown'd,
The veil and diadem flew far away ;

(The gift of Venus on her bridal day.)
Around a train of weeping sisters stands,
To raise her sinking with assistant hands. 605
Scarce from the verge of death recall'd again,
She faints, or but recovers to complain.

O wretched husband of a wretched wife !
Born with one fate, to one unhappy life !
For sure one star its baneful beam display'd 610
On Priam's roof, and Hippoplacia's shade.
From diff'rent parents, diff'rent climes we came,
At diff'rent periods, yet our fate the same !

Why was my birth to great Aetion ow'd,
And why was all that tender care bestow'd ? 615
Would I had never been !—O thou the ghost
Of my dead husband ! miserably lost !

Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone !
And I abandon'd, desolate, alone !
An only child, once comfort of my pains, 620

Sad product now of hapless love remains !
No more to smile upon his sire ! no friend
To help him now ! no father to defend !
For should he 'scape the sword, the common doom !
What wrongs attend him, and what griefs to come ?

Ev'n from his own paternal roof expell'd, 626
Some stranger plows his patrimonial field.

The day, that to the shades the father sends,
Robs the sad orphan of his father's friends :
He, wretched outcast of mankind ! appears 630
For ever sad, for ever bath'd in tears ;

Amongst the happy unregarded, he
Hangs on the robe, or trembles at the knee,
While those his father's former bounty fed,
Nor reach the goblet nor divide the bread : 635
'The kindest but his present wants allay,
To leave him wretched the succeeding day.
Frugal compassion ! heedless they who boast
Both parents still, nor feel what he has lost,
Shall cry, ' Begone thy father feasts not here !' 640
The wretch obeys, retiring with a tear,
Thus wretched, thus retiring all in tears,
To my sad soul Astyanax appears !
Forc'd by repeated insults to return,
And to his widow'd mother vainly mourn. 645
He, who with tender delicacy bred,
With princes sported, and on dainties fed,
And when still ev'ning gave him up to rest,
Sunk soft in down upon the nurses breast,
Must—ah what must he not ? Whom Ilion calls 650
Astyanax, from her well-guarded walls,
Is now that name no more, unhappy boy !
Since now no more the father guards his Troy.
But thou, my Hector, ly'st expos'd in air,
Far from thy parents and thy consort's care, 655
Whose hand in vain, directed by her love,
'The martial scarf and robe of triumph wove.
Now to devouring flames be these a prey,
Useless to thee, from this accursed day ;
Yet let the sacrifice at least be paid. 660
An honour to the living, not the dead !
So spake the mournful dame ; her matrons hear,
Sigh back her sighs, and answer tear with tear.

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XXIII.

The Argument.

The funeral of Patroclus.

ACHILLES and the Myrmidons do honours to the body of Patroclus.

After the funeral feast, he retires to the sea-shore, where falling asleep, the ghost of his friend appears to him, and demands the rites of burial; the next morning the soldiers are sent with mules and waggons to fetch wood for the pyre. The funeral procession, and the offering their hair to the dead. Achilles sacrifices several animals, and lastly twelve Trojan captives, at the pile, then sets fire to it. He pays libations to the winds, which (at the instance of Iris) rise, and raise the flames. When the pile has burned all night they gather the bones, place them in an urn of gold, and raise the tomb. Achilles institutes the funeral games: the chariot race, the fight of the cestus, the wrestling, the foot-race, the single combat, the discuss, the shooting with arrows, the darting the javelin: the various descriptions of which, and the various success of the several antagonists make the greatest part of the book.

In this book ends the thirtieth day. The night following the ghost of Patroclus appears to Achilles: the one and thirtieth day is employed, in felling the timber for the pile; the two and thirtieth in burning it: and the three and thirtieth in the games. The scene is generally on the sea shore.

THUS humbled in the dust, the pensive train
Thro' the sad city mourn'd her hero slain.
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The body, soil'd with dust and black with gore,
 Lies on broad Hellespont's resounding shore :
 The Grecians seek their ships, and clear the strand, 5
 All but the martial Myrmidonian band :
 These yet assembled great Achilles holds,
 And the stern purpose of his mind unfolds.
 Not yet (my brave companions of the war)
 Release your smoking coursers from the car ; 10
 But, with his chariot each in order led,
 Perform due honours to Patroclus dead.
 Ere yet from rest or food we seek relief,
 Some rites remain, to glut our rage of grief.
 The troops obey'd ; and thrice in order led 15
 (Achilles first) their coursers round the dead ;
 And thrice their sorrows and laments renew ;
 Tears bathe their arms, and tears the sands bedew.
 For such a warrior Thetis aids their woe,
 Melts their strong hearts, and bids their eyes to flow. 20
 But chief, Pelides : thick-succeeding sighs
 Burst from his heart, and torrents from his eyes :
 His slaught'ring hands, yet red with blood, he laid
 On his dead friend's cold breast, and thus he said.
 All hail, Patroclus ! let thy honour'd ghost 25
 Hear, and rejoice in Pluto's dreary coast ;
 Behold ! Achilles' promise is complete ;
 The bloody Hector stretch'd before thy feet.
 Lo ! to the dogs his carcase I resign ;
 And twelve sad victims of the Trojan line, 30
 Sacred to vengeance, instant shall expire,
 Their lives effus'd around thy fun'ral pyre.
 Gloomy he said, and (horrible to view)
 Before the bier the bleeding Hector threw,
 Prone on the dust. The Myrmidons around 35
 Unbrac'd their armour, and the steeds unbound.
 All to Achilles' sable ship repair,
 Frequent and full, the genial feast to share.
 Now from the well-fed swine black smokes aspire,
 The bristly victims lissing o'er the fire : 40
 The huge ox bellowing falls ; with feebl' crier
 Expires the goat ; the sheep in silence dies.
 Around the hero's prostrate body flow'd
 In one promiscuous stream, the reeking blood,

And now a band of Argive monarchs brings 45
 The glorious victor to the king of kings.
 From his dead friend the pensive warrior went,
 With steps unwilling, to the regal tent.
 Th' attending heralds, as by office bound,
 With kindled flames the tripod-vase surround; 50
 To cleanse his conq'ring hands from hostile gore,
 They urg'd in vain; the chief refus'd, and swore.
 No drop shall touch me, by almighty Jove!
 The first and greatest of the gods above!
 Till on the pyre I place thee; till I rear 55
 The grassy mound, and clip thy sacred hair.
 Some ease at least those pious rites may give,
 And sooth my sorrows, while I bear to live.
 Howe'er, reluctant as I am, I stay,
 And share your feast; but, with the dawn of day, 60
 (O king of men!) it claims thy royal care,
 That Greece the warrior's fun'ral pile prepare,
 And bid the forests fall: (such rites are paid
 To heroes slumb'ring in eternal shade:)
 Then, when his earthly part shall mount in fire, 65
 Let the leagu'd squadrons to their posts retire.
 He spoke; they hear him, and the word obey;
 The rage of hunger and of thirst allay,
 Then ease in sleep the labours of the day. }
 But great Pelides, stretch'd along the shore, 70
 Where dash'd on rocks the broken billows roar,
 Lies inly groaning; while, on either hand,
 The martial Myrmidons confus'dly stand:
 Along the grass his languid members fall,
 Tir'd with his chace around the Trojan wall; 75
 Hush'd by the murmurs of the rolling deep,
 At length he sinks in the soft arms of sleep.
 When lo! the shade, before his closing eyes,
 Of sad Patroclus rose, or seem'd to rise;
 In the same robe he living wore, he came, 80
 In stature, voice, and pleasing look the same.
 The form familiar hover'd o'er his head,
 And sleeps Achilles? (thus the phantom said,) }
 Sleeps my Achilles, his Patroclus dead? }
 Living, I seem'd his dearest, tend'rest care, 81
 But now, forgot, I wander in the air;

Let my pale corse the rites of burial know,
 And give me entrance in the realms below :
 Till then, the spirit finds no resting place,
 But here and there the unbody'd spectres chase 90
 The vagrant dead around the dark abode,
 Forbid to cross th' irremeable flood.

Now give thy hand ; for to the farther shore
 When once we pass, the soul returns no more.
 When once the last funereal flames ascend, 95
 No more shall meet Achilles and his friend,
 No more our thoughts to those we lov'd make known,
 Or quit the dearest to converse alone.

Me fate has sever'd from the sons of earth,
 The fate fore-doom'd that waited from my birth : 100
 Thee too it waits ; before the Trojan wall
 Ev'n great and godlike thou art doom'd to fall.

Hear then ; and, as in fate and love we join,
 Ah suffer that my bones may rest with thine !
 Together have we liv'd, together bred, 105
 One house receiv'd us, and one table fed :
 That golden urn thy goddess-mother gave,
 May mix our ashes in one common grave.

And is it you ? (he answers ;) to my sight
 Once more return'st thou from the realms of night ?
 Oh more than brother ! think each office paid, 111
 Whate'er can rest a discontented shade ;
 But grant one last embrace, unhappy boy !
 Afford at least that melancholy joy.

He said, and with his longing arms essay'd 115
 In vain to grasp the visionary shade ;
 Like a thin smoke he sees the spirit fly,
 And hears a feeble lamentable cry.

Confus'd he wakes ; amazement breaks the bands
 Of golden sleep, and starting from the sands, 120
 Pensive he muses with uplifted hands.

'Tis true, 'tis certain ; man tho' dead, retains
 Part of himself ; th' immortal mind remains :
 The form subsists without the body's aid,
 Aerial semblance, and an empty shade ! 125
 This night my friend, so late in battle lost,
 Stood at my side, a pensive, plaintive ghost ;
 Ev'n now familiar, as in life he came,
 Alas ! how diff'rent, yet how like the same !

Thus while he spoke, each eye grew big with tears :
And now the rosy-finger'd morn appears, 131
Shews ev'ry mournful face with tears o'erspread,
And glares on the pale visage of the dead.
But Agamemnon, as the rites demand,
With mules and waggons sends a chosen band ; 135
To load the timber, and the pile to rear,
A charge consign'd to Merion's faithful care.
With proper instruments they take the road,
Axes to cut, and ropes to sling the load,
First march the heavy mules, securely slow, 140
O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks they go :
Jumping, high o'er the shrubs of the rough ground,
Rattle the clatt'ring cars, and the shock'd axles bound.
But when arriv'd at Ida's spreading woods,
(Fair Ida, water'd with descending floods,) 145
Loud sounds the axe, redoubling strokes on strokes;
On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks
Headlong. Deep-echoing groan the thickets brown :
Then rustling, crackling, crushing thunder down.
The wood the Grecians cleave, prepar'd to burn ; 150
And the slow mules the same rough road return.
The sturdy woodmen equal burdens bore
(Such charge was given them) to the sandy shore ;
There, on the spot which great Achilles show'd,
They eas'd their shoulders, and dispos'd the load ; 155
Circling around the place, where times to come
Shall view Patroclus' and Achilles' tomb.
The hero bids his martial troops appear
High on their cars in all the pomp of war ;
Each in refulgent arms his limbs attires, 160
All mount their chariots, combatants and squires.
The chariots first proceed, a shining train,
Then clouds of foot that smoke along the plain :
Next these a melancholy band appear,
Amidst, lay dead Patroclus on the bier. 165
O'er all the corse their scatter'd locks they throw :
Achilles next, oppress'd with mighty woe,
Supporting with his hands the hero's head,
Bends o'er th' extended body of the dead.
Patroclus decent on th' appointed ground 170
They place, and heap the sylvan pile around.

But great Achilles stands apart in pray'r,
 And from his head divides the yellow hair;
 Those curling locks which from his youth he vow'd,
 And sacred grew to Sperchius' honour'd flood: 175
 Then sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,
 And roll'd his eyes around the wat'ry waste.
 Sperchius! whose waves, in mazy errors lost,
 Delightful roll along my native coast!
 To whom we vainly vow'd, at our return, 180
 These locks to fall, and hecatombs to burn:
 Full fifty rams to bleed in sacrifice,
 Where to the day thy silver fountains rise,
 And where in shade of consecrated bow'rs
 Thy altars stand, perfum'd with native flow'rs! 185
 So vow'd my father, but he vow'd in vain,
 No more Achilles sees his native plain;
 In that vain hope these hairs no longer grow,
 Patroclus bears them to the shades below.
 Thus o'er Patroclus while the hero pray'd, 190
 On his cold hand the sacred lock he laid.
 Once more afresh the Grecian sorrows flow:
 And now the sun had set upon their woe;
 But to the king of men thus spoke the chief.
 Enough, Atrides! give the troops relief: 195
 Permit the mourning legions to retire,
 And let the chiefs alone attend the pyre;
 The pious care be ours, the dead to burn—
 He said: the people to their ships return:
 While those deputed to inter the slain, 200
 Heap with a rising pyramid the plain.
 A hundred foot in length, a hundred wide,
 The growing structure spreads on ev'ry side;
 High on the top the manly corse they lay,
 And well-fed sheep, and sable oxen slay: 205
 Achilles cover'd with their fat the dead,
 And the pil'd victims round the body spread.
 Then jars of honey, and of fragrant oil
 Suspends around, low-bending o'er the pile.
 Four sprightly coursers, with a deadly groan 210
 Pour forth their lives, and on the pyre are thrown.
 Of nine large dogs, domestic at his board,
 Fall two, selected to attend their lord.

Then last of all, and horrible to tell,
Sad sacrifice ! twelve Trojan captives fell. 215
On these the rage of fire victorious preys,
Involves and joins them in one common blaze.
Smear'd with the bloody rites he stands on high,
And calls the spirit with a dreadful cry.

All hail, Patroclus ! let thy vengeful ghost 220
Hear, and exult on Pluto's dreary coast.
Behold, Achilles' promise fully paid,
'Twelve Trojan heroes offer'd to thy shade ;
But heavier fates on Hector's corse attend,
Sav'd from the flames, for hungry dogs to rend. 225

So spake he, threat'ning : but the gods made vain
His threat, and guard inviolate the slain :
Celestial Venus hover'd o'er his head,
And roseate unguents, heav'nly fragrance ! shed :
She watch'd him all the night, and all the day, 230
And drove the blood-hounds from their destin'd prey.
Nor sacred Phœbus less employ'd his care ;
He pour'd around a veil of gather'd air,
And kept the nerves undry'd, the flesh intire,
Against the solar beam and Sirian fire. 235

Nor yet the pile, where dead Patroclus lies,
Smokes, nor as yet the sullen flames arise ;
But fast beside Achilles stood in pray'r,
Invok'd the gods whose spirit moves the air,
And victims promis'd, and libations cast, 240
To gentle Zephyr and the Boreal blast :
He call'd th' aerial pow'rs along the skies,
To breathe, and whisper to the fires to rise.
The winged Iris heard the hero's call,
And instant hasten'd to their airy hall. 245

Where, in old Zephyr's open courts on high,
Sat all the blust'ring brethren of the sky.
She shone amidst them on her painted bow ;
The rocky pavement glitter'd with the show.
All from the banquet rise, and each invites 250
The various goddess to partake the rites.
Not so, (the dame reply'd,) I haste to go
To sacred Ocean, and the floods below :
Ev'n now our solemn hecatombs attend,
And heav'n is feasting on the world's green end, 255

With righteous Æthiops, (uncorrupted train !)
Far on th' extremest limits of the main.
But Peleus' son intreats, with sacrifice,
'The western spirit, and the north to rise;
Let on Patroclus' pile your blast be driv'n, 260
And bear the blazing honours high to heav'n.
Swift at the word, she vanish'd from their view ;
Swift at the word, the winds tumultuous flew ;
Forth burst the stormy band with thund'ring roar,
And heaps on heaps the clouds are tost before. 265
To the wide main then stooping from the skies,
'The heaving deeps in wat'ry mountains rise.
Troy feels the blast along her shaking walls,
'Till on the pile the gather'd tempest falls.
The structure crackles in the roaring fires, 270
And all the night the plenteous flame aspires.
All night Achilles hails Patroclus' soul,
With large libations from the golden bowl.
As a poor father, helpless and undone,
Mourns o'er the ashes of an only son, 275
Takes a sad pleasure the last bones to burn,
And pours in tears, ere yet they close the urn :
So stay'd Achilles circling round the shore,
So watch'd the flames, till now they flame no more.
'Twas when, emerging thro' the shades of night, 280
The morning planet told th' approach of light ;
And fast behind Aurora's warmer ray
O'er the broad ocean pour'd the golden day :
'Then sunk the blaze, the pile no longer burn'd,
And to their caves the whistling winds return'd : 285
Across the Thracian seas their course they bore ;
'The ruffled seas beneath their passage roar.
'Then parting from the pile he ceas'd to weep,
And sunk to quiet in th' embrace of sleep,
Exhausted with his grief : meanwhile the crowd 290
Of thronging Grecians round Achilles stood ;
'The tumult wak'd him : from his eyes he shook
Unwilling slumber, and the chiefs bespoke.
Ye kings and princes of th' Achæan name !
First let us quench the yet remaining flame 295
With sable wine ; then (as the rites direct)
'The hero's bones with careful view select :

(Apart, and easy to be known they lie,
Amidst the heap, and obvious to the eye :
The rest around the margins will be seen, 300
Promiscuous, steeds and immolated men :

These, wrapt in double claws of fat, prepare,
And in the golden vase dispose with care ;
There let him rest with decent honour laid,
Till I shall follow to th' infernal shade. 305

Meantime erect the tomb with pious hands,
A common structure on the humble sands ;
Hereafter Greece some nobler work may raise,
And late posterity record our praise.

The Greeks obey ; where yet the embers glow
Wide o'er the pile the sable wine they throw, 311
And deep subsides the ashy heap below.

Next the white bones his sad companions place,
With tears collected, in the golden vase.
The sacred relics to the tent they bore ; 315
The urn a veil of linen cover'd o'er.

That done, they bid the sepulchre aspire,
And cast the deep foundations round the pyre ;
High in the midst they heap the swelling edd,
Of rising earth, memorial of the dead. 320

The swarming populace the chief detains,
And leads amidst a wide extent of plains ;
There plac'd 'em round : then from the ships proceeds
A train of oxen, mules, and stately steeds, 325

Vases and tripods, for the funeral games,
Resplendent brass, and more resplendent dames.
First stood the prizes to reward the force
Of rapid racers in the dusty course.

A woman for the first, in beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in the needle, and the lab'ring loom : 330
And a large vase, where two bright handles rise,
Of twenty measures its capacious size.

The second victor claims a mare unbroke,
Big with a mule, unknowing of the yoke ;
The third, a charger yet untouch'd by flame, 335
Four ample measures held the shining frame :

Two golden talents for the fourth were plac'd,
An ample double bow contents the last.

- These in fair order rang'd upon the plain,
The hero, rising, thus address the train. 340
Behold the prizes, valiant Greeks! decreed
To the brave rulers of the racing steed;
Prizes which none beside ourself could gain,
Should our immortal coursers take the plain;
(A race unrivall'd, which from ocean's god 345
Peleus receiv'd, and on his son bestow'd.)
But this no time our vigour to display,
Nor suit, with them, the games of this sad day:
Lost is Patroclus now, that wont to deck
Their flowing manes, and sleek their glossy neck. 350
Sad, as they shar'd in human grief, they stand,
And trail those graceful honours on the sand!
Let others for the noble task prepare,
Who trust the courser, and the flying car.
Fir'd at his word, the rival racers rise; 355
But far the first, Eumelus hopes the prize,
Fam'd thro' Piera for the fleetest breed,
And skill'd to manage the high bounding steed.
With equal ardour bold Tydides swell'd.
The steeds of 'Tros beneath his yoke compell'd, 360
Which late obey'd the Dardan chief's command,
When scarce a god redeem'd him from his hand.)
Then Menelaus his Podargus brings,
And the fam'd courser of the king of kings:
Whom rich Echepolus, (more rich than brave,) 365
To'scape the wars, to Agamemnon gave,
(Æthe her name,) at home to end his days,
Base wealth preferring to eternal praise.
Next him Antilochus demands the course,
With beating heart, and cheers his Pylian horse. 370
Experienc'd Nestor gives his son the reins,
Directs his judgment, and his heat restrains;
Nor idly warns the hoary sire, nor hears
The prudent son with unattending ears.
My son, tho' youthful ardour fire thy breast, 375
The gods have lov'd thee, and with arts have blest.
Neptune and Jove on thee conferr'd the skill,
Swift round the goal to turn the flying wheel.
To guide thy conduct, little precept needs;
But slow, and past their vigour, are my steeds. 380

Fear not thy rivals, tho' for swiftness known,
Compare those rivals judgment and thy own.
It is not strength, but art, obtains the prize,
And to be swift is less than to be wise ;
'Tis more by art, than force of num'rous strokes, 385
The dext'rous woodman shapes the stubborn oaks ;
By art the pilot, thro' the boiling deep,
And howling tempest, steers the fearless ship ;
And 'tis the artist wins the glorious course,
Not those who trust in chariots, and in horse. 390
In vain unskilful to the goal they strive,
And short, or wide, th' ungovern'd courser drive :
While with sure skill, tho' with inferior steeds,
The knowing racer to his end proceeds ;
Fix'd on the goal his eye fore-runs the course, 395
His hand unerring steers the steady horse.
And now contracts, or now extends the rein,
Observing still the formost on the plain.
Mark then the goal, 'tis easy to be found ;
Yon aged trunk, a cubit from the ground ; 400
Of some once stately oak the last remains,
Or hardy fir, unperish'd with the rains ;
Inclos'd with stones conspicuous from afar,
And round, a circle for the wheeling car.
(Some tomb perhaps of old, the dead to grace : 405
Or then, as now, the limit of a race.)
Bear close to this, and warily proceed,
A little bending to the left hand steed ;
But urge the right, and give him all the reins :
While thy strict hand his fellow's head restrains, 410
And turns him short ; till doubling as they roll,
The wheel's round naves appear to brush the goal.
Yet (not to break the car, or lame the horse)
Clear of the stony heap direct the course ;
Least, thro' incaution failing, thou may'st be 415
A joy to others, a reproach to me.
So shalt thou pass the goal, secure of mind,
And leave unskilful swiftness far behind.
Tho' thy fierce rival drove the matchless steed
Which bore Adrastus, of celestial breed ; 420
Or the fam'd race thro' all the regions known,
That whirl'd the car of proud Laomedon.

Thus, (nought unsaid), the much-advising sage
Concludes ; then sat, stiff with unwieldy age.
Next bold Meriones was seen to rise, 425
The last, but not least ardent for the prize.
They mount their seats ! the lots their place dispose ;
(Roll'd in his helmet, these Achilles throws).
Young Nestor leads the race : Eumelus then ;
And next the brother of the king of men : 430
Thy lot, Meriones, the fourth was cast ;
And far the bravest, Diomed, was last.
They stand in order an impatient train ;
Pelides points the barrier on the plain,
And sends before old Phœnix to the place, 435
To mark the racers, and to judge the race.
At once the coursers from the barrier bound ;
The lifted scourges all at once resound ;
Their heart, their eyes, their voice, they send before ;
And up the champain thunder from the shore : 440
Thick, where they drive, the dusty clouds arise,
And the lost courser in the whirlwind flies ?
Loose on his shoulders the long manes reclin'd,
Float in their speed, and dance upon the wind :
The smoking chariots, rapid as they bound, 445
Now seem to touch the sky, and now the ground.
While hot for fame, and conquest all their care,
(Each o'er his flying courser hung in air),
Erect with ardour, pois'd upon the rein,
They pant, they stretch, they shout along the plain. 450
Now, the last compass fetch'd around the goal),
At the near prize each gathers all his soul,
Each burns with double hope, with double pain,
Tears up the shore, and thunders tow'rd the main.
First flew Eumelus on Pheretian steeds ; 455
With those of 'Tros, bold Diomed succeeds :
Close on Eumelus' back they puff the wind,
And seem just mounting on his car behind ;
Full on his neck he feels the sultry breeze,
And, hov'ring o'er, their stretching shadows sees. 460
Then had he lost, or left a doubtful prize ;
But angry Phœbus to Tydides flies,
Strikes from his hand the scourge, and renders vain
His matchless horses labour on the plain.

Rage fills his eye with anguish, to survey 465
Snatch'd from his hope the glories of the day.

The fraud celestial Pallas sees with pain,
Springs to her knight, and gives the scourge again,
And fills his steeds with vigour. At a stroke,
She breaks his rival's chariot from the yoke; 470

No more their way the startled horses held;
The car revers'd came rattling on the field;
Shot headlong from his seat, beside the wheel,
Prone on the dust th' unhappy master fell;

His batter'd face and elbows strike the ground; 475
Nose, mouth, and front, one undistinguish'd wound;
Grief stops his voice, a torrent drown'd his eyes;
Before him far the glad Tydides flies;

Minerva's spirit drives his matchless pace,
And crowns him victor of the labour'd race. 480

The next, tho' distant, Menelaus succeeds;
While thus young Nestor animates his steeds.
Now, now my gen'rous pair, exert your force:

Not that we hope to match Tydides' horse,
Since great Minerva wings their rapid way, 485
And gives their lord the honours of the day.

But reach Atrides! shall his mare out-go
Your swiftness? vanquish'd by a female foe?
Thro' your neglect, if lagging on the plain,
The last ignoble gift be all we gain; 490

No more shall Nestor's hand your food supply,
The old man's fury rises, and ye die.
Haste then; yon narrow road before our sight
Presents the' occasion, could we use it right.

Thus he. The coursers at their masters threat 495
With quicker steps the sounding champain beat.
And now Antilochus with nice survey,
Observes the compass of the hollow way.

'Twas where by force of wintry torrents torn,
Fast by the road a precipice was worn: 500
Here, where but one could pass to shun the throng,
The spartan hero's chariot smoak'd along.

Close up the vent'rous youth resolves to keep,
Still edging near, and bears him tow'rd the steep.
Atrides, trembling, casts his eye below, 505
And wonders at the rashness of his foe.

Hold stay your steeds—What madness thus to ride
 This narrow way? take larger field (he cry'd,)
 Or both must fall—Atides cry'd in vain;
 He flies more fast, and throws up all the rein. 510
 Far as an able arm the disk can send,
 When youthful rivals their full force extend,
 So far Antilochus! thy chariot flew
 Before the king: he, cautious, backward drew
 His horse compell'd; foreboding in his fears 515
 The rattling ruin of the clashing cars,
 The flound'ring coursers rolling on the plain,
 And conquest lost, thro' frantic haste to gain:
 But thus upbraids his rival as he flies;
 Go, furious youth, ungen'rous and unwise! 520
 Go, but expect not I'll the prize resign:
 Add perjury to fraud, and make it thine—
 Then to his steeds with all his force he cries;
 Be swift, be vig'rous, and regain the prize!
 Your rivals, destitute of youthful force, 525
 With fainting knees shall labour in the course,
 And yield the glory yours—The steeds obey;
 Already at their heels they wing their way,
 And seem already to retrieve the day. }
 Meantime the Grecians in a ring beheld 530
 The coursers bounding o'er the dusty field,
 The first who mark'd them was the Cretan king;
 High on a rising ground, above the ring,
 The monarch sat: from whence with sure survey
 He well observ'd the chief who led the way, 535
 And heard from far his animating cries,
 And saw the foremost steed with sharpen'd eyes;
 On whose broad front a blaze of shining white,
 Like the full moon, stood obvious to the sight.
 He saw; and rising, to the Greeks begun. 540
 Are yonder horse discern'd by me alone?
 Or can ye all another chief survey,
 And other steeds, than lately led the way?
 Those, tho' the swiftest, by some god with-held,
 Lie sure disabled in the middle field: 545
 For since the goal they doubled round the plain
 I search to find them, but I search in vain.

Perchance the reins forsook the driver's hand
 And turn'd to short he tumbled on the strand,
 Shot from the chariot ; while his coursers stray 550
 With frantic fury from the destin'd way.

(Rise then some other, and inform my sight,
 For these dim eyes, perhaps discern not right ;)
 Yet sure he seems, (to judge by shape and air,)
 The great Ætholian chief renown'd in war. 555

Old man ! (Oileus rashly thus replies,)
 Thy tongue too hastily confers the prize.
 Of those who view the course, not sharpest ey'd,
 Nor youngest, yet the readiest to decide,
 Eumelus' steeds, high bounding in the chace, 560
 Still as at first, unrival'd lead the race :
 I well discern him as he shakes the rein,
 And hear his shouts victorious o'er the plain.
 Thus he. Idomeneus incens'd rejoin'd :
 Barb'rous of words and arrogant of mind ! 565
 Contentious prince, of all the Greeks beside
 The last in merit as the first in pride.

To vile reproach what answer can we make ?
 A goblet or a tripod let us stake,
 And be the king the judge. The most unwise 570
 Will learn their rashness, when they pay the price.

He said ; and Ajax, by mad passion borne,
 Stern had reply'd ; fierce scorn enhancing scorn
 To fell extremes. But Thetis' godlike son
 Awful amidst them rose, and thus begun. 575

Forbear, ye chiefs ! reproachful to contend ;
 Much would ye blame, should others thus offend :
 And lo ! th' approaching steeds your contest end. }
 No sooner had he spoke, but thund'ring near,
 Drives thro' a stream of dust the charioteer : 580
 High o'er his head the circling lash he wields ;
 His bounding horses scarcely touch the fields :
 His car amidst the dusty whirlwind roll'd
 Bright with the mingled blaze of tin and gold,
 Refulgent thro' the cloud : no eye could find 585
 The track his flying wheels had left behind :
 And the fierce coursers urg'd their rapid pace
 So swift, it seem'd a flight, and not a race.

Now victor at the goal Tydides stands,
 Quits his bright car, and springs upon the sands; 590
 From the hot steeds the sweaty torrents stream:
 The well-ply'd whip is hung athwart the beam:
 With joy brave Sthenelus receives the prize,
 The tripod vase, and dame with radiant eyes:
 These to the ships his train triumphant leads, 595
 The chief himself unyokes the panting steeds.

Young Nestor follows (who by art, not force,
 O'er past Atrides) second in the course.
 Behind, Attrides urg'd the race, more near 600
 Than to the courser in his swift career
 The following car, just touching with his heel,
 And brushing with his tail the whirling wheel.
 Such, and so narrow now the space between
 The rivals, late so distant on the green:
 So soon swift Æthe her lost ground regain'd, 605
 One length, one moment had the race obtain'd.

Merion pursu'd at greater distance still,
 With tardier coursers and inferior skill.
 Last came, Admetus! thy unhappy son:
 Slow dragg'd the steeds his batter'd chariot on: 610
 Achilles saw, and pitying thus begun.

Behold! the man whose matchless art surpast
 The sons of Greece! the ablest, yet the last!
 Fortune denies, but justice bids us pay
 (Since great Tydides bears the first away) 615
 To him the second honours of the day.

The Greeks consent with loud applauding cries,
 And then Eumelus had receiv'd the prize,
 But youthful Nestor, jealous of his fame,
 Th' award opposes, and asserts his claim. 620
 Think not (he cries) I tamely will resign,
 O Peleus' son! the mare so justly mine.
 What if the gods, the skilful to confound,
 Have thrown the horse and horsemen to the ground?
 Perhaps he sought not heav'n by sacrifice, 625
 And vows omitted forfeited the prize.
 If yet, (distinction to thy friend to show,
 And please a soul desirous to bestow,)
 Some gift must grace Eumelus; view thy store.
 Of beauteous handmaids, steeds, and shining ore, 630

An ample present let him thence receive,
And Greece shall praise thy gen'rous thirst to give.
But this, my prize, I never shall forego;
This, who but touches, warriors! is my foe.

Thus spake the youth; nor did his words offend;
Pleas'd with the well-turn'd flatt'ry of a friend, 635
Achilles smil'd; the gift propos'd, (he cry'd,)
Antilochus! we shall ourself provide.
With plates of brass the cors'let cover'd o'er,
(The same renown'd Asteropæus wore,) 640
Whose glitt'ring margins rais'd with silver shine,
(No vulgar gift,) Eumelus, shall be thine.

He said: Automedon at his command
The cors'let brought, and gave it to his hand.
Distinguish'd by his friend, his bosom glows 645
With gen'rous joy: then Menelaus rose;
The herald plac'd the sceptre in his hands
And still'd the clamour of the shooting bands.
Not without cause incens'd at Nestor's son,
And, inly grieving, thus the king begun: 650

The praise of wisdom, in thy youth obtain'd,
An act so rash (Antilochus) has stain'd.
Robb'd of my glory and my just reward,
To you, O Grecians! be my wrong declar'd:
So not a leader shall our conduct blame, 655
Or judge me envious of a rival's fame;
But shall not we, ourselves, the truth maintain?
What needs appealing in a fact so plain?
What Greek shall blame me, if I bid thee rise
And vindicate by oath th' ill-gotten prize? 660
Rise, if thou dar'st, before thy chariot stand,
The driving scourge high-lifted in thy hand,
I yield; that all may know my soul can bend,
And touch thy steeds, and swear thy whole intent
Was but to conquer, not to circumvent.
Swear by that god whose liquid arms surround 665
The globe, and whose dread earthquakes heave the
ground.

The prudent chief with calm attention heard;
Then mildly thus: Excuse, if youth have err'd;
Superior as thou art, forgive th' offence,
Nor I thy equal, or in years or sense. 670

Thou knowest the errors of unripen'd age.
 Weak are its counsels, headlong is its rage.
 The prize I quit, if thou thy wrath resign;
 The mare, or ought thou ask'st, be freely thine,
 Ere I become (from thy dear friendship torn)
 hateful to thee, and to the gods forsworn. 675

So spake Antilochus; and, at the word,
 The mare contested to the king restor'd.
 Joy swells his soul as when the vernal grain
 Lifts the green ear above the springing plain,
 The fields their vegetable life renew,
 And laugh and glitter with the morning dew;
 Such joy the Spartan's shining face o'erspread,
 And lifted his gay heart, while thus he said. 680

Still may our souls, O gen'rous youth! agree, 685
 'Tis now Atrides' turn to yield to thee.

Rash heat perhaps a moment might controul,
 Not break, the settled temper of thy soul.
 Not but (my friend) 'tis still the wiser way
 To wave contention with superior sway; 690
 For ah! how few, who should like thee offend,
 Like thee, have talents to regain the friend?

To plead indulgence, and thy fault atone,
 Suffice thy father's merit and thy own:
 Gen'rous alike, for me the sire and son 695
 Have greatly suffer'd, and have greatly done.
 I yield; that all may know my soul can bend,
 Nor is my pride prefer'd before my friend.

He said; and pleas'd his passion to command,
 Resign'd the courser to Neoman's hand, 700
 Friend of the youthful chief; himself content,
 The shining charger to his vessel sent.

The golden talents Merion next obtain'd;
 The fifth reward, the double bowl, remain'd.
 Achilles this to rev'rend Nestor bears, 705
 And thus the purpose of his gift declares.

Accept thou this, O sacred sire! (he said),
 In dear memorial of Patroclus dead;
 Dead, and for ever lost Patroclus lies,
 For ever snatch'd from our desiring eyes! 710
 Take thou this token of a grateful heart,
 Tho' 'tis not thine to hurl the distant dart,

The quoit to toss, the pond'rous mace to yield,
Or urge the race, or wrestle on the field.

Thy present vigour age has overthrown, 715
But left the glory of the past thy own.

He said, and plac'd the goblet at his side;
With joy, the venerable king reply'd.

Wisely and well, my son, thy words have prov'd
A senior honour'd, and a friend belov'd 720

Too true it is, deserted of my strength,
These wither'd arms and limbs have fail'd at length.

Oh! had I now that force I felt of yore,
Known thro' Buprasium and the Pylian shore!

Victorious then in ev'ry solemn game, 725
Ordain'd to Amaryneces' mighty name;

The brave Epeians gave my glory way,
Ætolians, Pylians, all resign'd the day.

I quell'd Clytomedes in fights of hand
And backward hurl'd Ancæus on the sand, 730

Surpast Iphycus in the swift career,
Phyleus and Polydorus, with the spear.

The sons of Actor won the prize of horse,
But won by numbers, not by art or force: 735

For the fam'd twins impatient to survey,
Prize after prize by Nestor borne away.

Sprung to their car: and with united pains
One lash'd the coursers, while one rul'd the reins.

Such once I was! now to these tasks succeeds
A younger race, that emulate our deeds; 740

I yield, Alas! (to age who must not yield?)
Tho' once the foremost hero of the field.

Go thou! my son! by gen'rous friendship led,
With martial honours decorate the dead;

While pleas'd I take the gift thy hands present, 745
(Pledge of benevolence, and kind intent,)

Rejoic'd, of all the num'rous Greeks to see
Not one but honours sacred age and me;

Those due distinctions thou so well can'st pay,
May the just gods return another day. 750

Proud of the gift, thus spake the full of days:
Achilles heard him, prouder of the praise.

The prizes next are order'd to the field,
For the bold champions who the cæstus wield.

- A stately mule, as yet by toils unbroke, 755
 Of six years age, unconscious of the yoke,
 Is to the circus led, and firmly bound ;
 Next stands a goblet, massy, large and round.
 Achilles rising thus : Let Greece excite
 Two heroes equal to this hardy fight : 760
 Who dares his foe with lifted arms provoke,
 And rush beneath the long-descending stroke ?
 On whom Apollo shall the palm bestow,
 And whom the Greeks supreme by conquest know,
 This mule his dauntless labour shall repay ; 765
 The vanquish'd bear the massy bowl away.
 This dreadful combat great Epeus chose,
 High o'er the crow'd, enormous bulk ! he rose,
 And seiz'd the beast, and thus began to say :
 Stand forth some man, to bear the bowl away : 770
 (Price of his ruin :) for who dares deny
 This mule my right, th' undoubted victor I.
 Others, 'tis own'd, in fields of battle shine,
 But the first honours of this fight are mine ;
 For who excells in all ? Then let my foe 775
 Draw near, but first his certain fortune know,
 Secure, this hand shall his whole frame confound,
 Mash all his bones, and all his body pound :
 So let his friends be nigh, a needful train,
 To heave the batter'd carcase of the plain. 780
 The giant spoke ; and in a stupid gaze
 The host beheld him, silent with amaze !
 'Twas thou, Euryalus ! who durst aspire
 To meet his might, and emulate thy sire,
 The great Mecistheus, who in days of yore, 785
 In Theban games the noblest trophy bore,
 (The games ordain'd dead Oedipus to grace,)
 And singly vanquish'd the Cadmean race.
 Him great Tydides urges to contend,
 Warm with the hopes of conquest for his friend, 790
 Officious with the cincture girds him round :
 And to his wrist the gloves of death are bound.
 Amid the circle now each champion stands,
 And poises high in air his iron hands ;

With clashing gauntlets now they fiercely close, 795 }
Their crackling jaws re-echo to the blows, }
And painful sweat from all their members flows. }
At length Epeus dwelt a weighty blow,
Full on the cheek of his unwary foe ;
Beneath that pond'rous arm's resistless sway 800
Down dropt he, nerveless, and extended lay.
As a large fish, when winds and waters roar,
By some huge billow dash'd against the shore,
Lies panting : not less batter'd with his wound,
The bleeding hero pants upon the ground. 805
To rear his fallen foe, the victor lends,
Scornful, his hand ; and gives him to his friends ;
Whose arms support him, reeling thro' the throng,
And dragging his disabled legs along ;
Nodding, his head hangs down his shoulder o'er ; 810
His mouth and nostrils pour the clotted gore ;
Wrapt round in mist he lies, and lost to thought ;
His friends receive the bowl, too dearly bought.
The third bold game Achilles next demands,
And calls the wrestlers to the level sands : 815
A massy triped for the victor lies,
Of twice six oxen its reputed price ;
And next, the loser's spirits to restore,
A female captive valu'd but at four.
Scarce did the chief the vig'rous strife propose, 820
When tow'r-like Ajax and Ulysses rose.
Amid the ring each nervous rival stands,
Embracing rigid with implicit hands :
Close-lock'd above, their heads and arms are mixt ;
Below, their planted feet, at distance fixt : 825
Like two strong rafters which the builder forms,
Proof to the wintry wind and howling storms,
Their tops connected, but at wider space,
Fixt on their centre stands their solid base.
Now to the grasp each manly body bends ; 830
The humid sweat from ev'ry pore descends ;
Their bones resound with blows : sides, shoulders, thighs,
Swell to each gripe, in bloody tumours rise.
Nor could Ulysses, for his art renown'd,
O'eturn the strength of Ajax on the ground ; 835

Nor could the strength of Ajax overthrow
 'The watchful caution of his artful foe.
 While the young strife ev'n tir'd the lookers-on,
 Thus to Ulysses spoke great Telamon,
 Or let me lift thee, chief, or lift thou me : 840
 Prove we our force, and Jove the rest decree.

He said ; and straining, heav'd him off the ground
 With matchless strength ; that time Ulysses found
 'The strength t' evade, and where the nerves combine
 His ankle strook : the giant fell supine ; 845
 Ulysses following, on his bosom lies ;
 Shouts of applause run ratt'ling thro' the skies.
 Ajax to lift, Ulysses next essays,
 He barely stirr'd him, but he could not raise :
 His knee lock'd fast, the foe's attempt deny'd ; 850
 And grappling close, they tumbled side by side.
 Defil'd with honourable dust, they roll,
 Still breathing strife, and unsubdu'd of soul :
 Again they rage, again to combat rise ;
 When great Achilles thus divides the prize. 855

Your noble vigour, oh my friends restrain ;
 Nor weary out your gen'rous strength in vain.
 Ye both have won ; let others who excel,
 Now prove that prowess you have prov'd so well.

The hero's words the willing chiefs obey, 860
 From their tir'd bodies wipe the dust away,
 And, cloth'd anew, the following games survey. }
 And now succeed the gifts, ordain'd to grace
 The youths contending in the rapid race.
 A silver urn that full six measures held, 865
 By none in weight or workmanship excell'd :
 Sidonian artists taught the frame to shine,
 Elaborate, with artifice divine :
 Whence Tyrian sailors did the prize transport,
 And gave to 'Thoas at the Lemnian port : 870
 From him descended good Eunæus heir'd
 The glorious gift ; and, for Lycaon spar'd,
 To brave Patroclus gave the rich reward. }
 Now, the same hero's fun'ral rites to grace,
 It stands the prize of swiftness in the race. 875
 A well-fed ox was for the second plac'd ;
 And half a talent must content the last.

Achilles rising then bespoke the train ;
 Who hope the palm of swiftness to obtain,
 Stand forth, and bear these prizes from the plain. 880 }

The hero said, and starting from his place,
 Oilean Ajax rises to the race ;
 Ulysses next, and he whose speed surpast
 His youthful equals, Nestor's son, the last.
 Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand ; 885

Pelides points the barrier with his hand ;
 All start at once ; Oileus led the race ;
 The next Ulysses, meas'ring pace with pace ;
 Behind him, diligently close, he sped,
 As closely following as the running thread 890

The spindle follows, and displays the charms
 Of the fair spinster's breast, and moving arms :
 Graceful in motion, thus his foe he plies,
 And treads each footstep ere the dust can rise:
 His glowing breath upon his shoulders plays ! 895

Th' admiring Greeks loud acclamations raise,
 To him they give their wishes, hearts, and eyes,
 And send their souls before him as he flies.
 Now three times turn'd in prospect of the goal,
 The panting chief to Pallas lifts his soul : 900

Assist, O goddess ! (thus in thought he pray'd,)
 And present at his thought, descends the maid.
 Buoy'd by her heav'nly force, he seems to swim,
 And feels a pinion lifting ev'ry limb.

All fierce and ready now the prize to gain, 905
 Unhappy Ajax stumbles on the plain ;
 (O'erturn'd by Pallas) where the slipp'ry shore
 We clogg'd with slimy dung, and mingled gore.

(The self same place, beside Patroclus pyre,
 Where late the slaughter'd victims fed the fire). 910

Besmear'd with filth, and blotted o'er with clay,
 Obscene to sight, the rueful racer lay ;
 The well-fed bull (the second prize) he shar'd,
 And left the urn Ulysses' rich reward.

Then, grasping by the horn the mighty beast, 915
 The baffled hero thus the Greeks address.

Accursed fate ! the conquest I forego ;
 A mortal I, a goddess was my foe ;

She urg'd her fav'rite on the rapid way,
And Pallas, not Ulysses, won the day. 920

Thus sourly wail'd he, sputt'ring dirt and gore,
A burst of laughter echo'd thro' the shore.
Antilochus, more hum'rous than the rest,
Takes the last prize, and takes it with a jest.

Why with our wiser elders should we strive? 925
The gods still love them, and they always thrive.
Ye see, to Ajax I must yield the prize:

He to Ulysses, still more ag'd and wise;
(A green old age unconscious of decays,
'That proves the hero born in better days!') 930
Behold his vigour in this active race!

Achilles only boasts a swifter pace:
For who can match Achilles? He who can,
Must yet be more than hero, more than man.

'Th' effect succeeds the speech. Pelides cries, 935
Thy artful praise deserves a better prize.

Nor Greece in vain shall hear thy friend extoll'd;
Receive a talent of the purest gold.
The youth departs content. The host admire
'The son of Nestor, worthy of his sire. 940

Next these a buckler, spear and helm, he brings,
Cast on the plain the brazen burden rings:
Arms, which of late divine Sarpedon wore,
And great Patroclus in short triumph bore.

Stand forth the bravest of our host! (he cries), 945
Whoever dares deserve so rich a prize,

Now grace the lists before our army's sight,
And, sheath'd in steel provoke his foe to fight.
Who first the jointed armour shall explore,
And stain his rival's mail with issuing gore; 950

The sword Asteropæus possess of old,
(A Thracian blade, distinct with studs of gold),
Shall pay the stroke, and grace the striker's side:
These arms in common let the chiefs divide:
For each brave champion, when the combat ends, 955
A sumptuous banquet at our tent attends.

Fierce at the word, uprose great 'Tydeus' son,
And the huge bulk of Ajax 'Telamon.
Clad in refulgent steel, on either hand,
The dreadful chiefs amid the circle stand: 960

Low'ring they meet, tremendous to the fight ;
 Each Argive bosom beats with fierce delight.
 Oppos'd in arms not long they idly stood,
 But thrice they clos'd, and thrice the charge renew'd.
 A furious pass the spear of Ajax made 965
 Thro' the broad shield, but at the corslet stay'd ;
 Not thus the foe : his jav'lin aim'd above
 The buckler's margin, at the neck he drove.
 But Greece, now trembling for her hero's life,
 Bade share the honours, and surcease the strife. 970
 Yet still the victor's due 'Tydides gains,
 With him the sword and studded belt remains.

Then hurl'd the hero, thund'ring on the ground,
 A mass of iron, (an enormous round,)
 Whose weight and size the circling Greeks admire,
 Rude from the furnace, and but shap'd by fire. 976
 This mighty quoit Aetion wont to rear,
 And from his whirling arm dismiss in air :
 The giant by Achilles slain, he stow'd
 Among his spoils this memorable load. 980
 For this, he bids those nervous artists vie,
 That teach the disk to sound along the sky.

Let him, whose might can hurl this bowl, arise,
 Who farthest hurls it, take it as his prize :
 If he be one, enrich'd with large domain 985
 Of downs for flocks, and arable for grain,
 Small stock of iron needs that man provide ;
 His hinds and swains whole years shall be supply'd
 From hence : nor ask the neighb'ring city's aid,
 For ploughshares, wheels, and all the rural trade. 990

Stern Polycetes stept before the throng ;
 And great Leonteus, more than mortal strong ;
 Whose force with rival forces to oppose,
 Uprose great Ajax ; up Epeus rose.
 Each stood in order : first Epeus threw ; 995
 High o'er the wond'ring crowds the whirling circle flew.
 Leonteus next a little space surpast,
 And third, the strength of godlike Ajax cast.
 O'er both their marks it flew ; till fiercely flung
 From Polycetes' arm, the discus sung : 1000
 Far, as a swain his whirling sheephook throws,
 That distant falls among the grazing cows,

So past them all the rapid circle flies :
 His friends (while loud applauses shake the skies)
 With force conjoin'd heave off the weighty prize. }
 Those, who in skilful archery contend, 1006
 He next invites the twanging bow to bend :
 And twice ten axes casts amidst the round,
 (Ten double-edg'd, and ten that singly wound.)
 The mast, which late a first-rate galley bore. 1010
 The hero fixes in the sandy shore,
 To the tall top a milk white dove they tie,
 The trembling mark at which their arrows fly,
 Whose weapon strikes yon flutt'ring bird, shall bear
 These two edg'd axes, terrible in war : 1015
 The single, he, whose shaft divides the cord.
 He said : experienc'd Merion took the word :
 And skilful Teucer : in the helm they threw
 Their lots inscrib'd, and forth the later flew.
 Swift from the string the sounding arrow flies ; 1020
 But flies unblest ! no grateful sacrifice,
 No firstling lambs, unheadful ! didst thou vow
 To Phœbus, patron of the shaft and bow.
 For this, thy well-aim'd arrow, turn'd aside,
 Err'd from the dove, yet cut the cord that ty'd : 1025
 A-down the main-mast fell the parted string,
 And the free bird to heav'n displays her wing :
 Seas, shores, and skies, with loud applause resound,
 And Merion eager meditates the wound :
 He takes the bow, directs the shafts above, 1030
 And following with his eye the soaring dove,
 Implores the god to speed it thro' the skies,
 With vows of firstling lambs, and grateful sacrifice.
 The dove, in airy circles as she wheels,
 Amid the clouds the piercing arrow feels ; 1035
 Quite thro' and thro' the point its passage found,
 And at his feet fell bloody to the ground.
 The wounded bird, ere yet she breath'd her last,
 With flagging wings alighted on the mast,
 A moment hung, and spread her pinions there, 1040
 Then sudden dropt, and left her life in air.
 From the pleas'd crowd new peals of thunder rise,
 And to the ships brave Merion bears the prize.

To close the fun'ral games, Achilles last
A massy spear amid the circle plac'd, 1045
And ample charger of unsullied frame,
With flow'rs high wrought, not blacken'd yet by flame.
For these he bids the heroes prove their art,
Whose dextrous skill directs the flying dart.
Here too great Merion hopes the noble prize; 1050
Nor hear disdain'd the king of men to rise,
With joy Pelides saw the honour paid,
Rose to the monarch, and respectful said.

The first in virtue, as in pow'r supreme,
O king of nations! all thy Greeks proclaim; 1055
In ev'ry martial game thy worth attest;
And know thee both their greatest, and their best;
Take then the prize, but let brave Merion bear
This beamy jav'lin in thy brother's war.

Pleas'd from the hero's lips his praise to hear, 1060
The king to Merion gives the brazen spear;
But, set apart for sacred use, commands
The glitt'ring charger to 'Falthybius' hands.

THE
I L I A D.

BOOK XXIV.

The Argument.

The redemption of the body of Hector:

THE gods deliberate about the redemption of Hector's body. Jupiter sends Thetis to Achilles to dispose him for the restoring it, and Iris to Priam, to encourage him to go in person, and treat for it. The old king, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his queen, makes ready for the journey, to which he is encouraged by an omen from Jupiter. He sets forth in his chariot, with a waggon loaded with presents under the charge of Idæus the herald. Mercury descends in the shape of a young man, and conducts him to the pavilion of Achilles. Their conversation on the way. Priam finds Achilles at his table, casts himself at his feet, and begs for the body of his son; Achilles moved with compassion, grants his request, detains him one night in his tent, and the next morning sends him home with the body: the Trojans run out to meet him. The lamentation of Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen, with the solemnities of the funeral.

The time of twelve days is employ'd in this book, while the body of Hector lies in the tent of Achilles. And as many more are spent in the truce allowed for his interment. The scene is partly in Achilles' camp, and partly in Troy.

NOW from the finish'd games the Grecian band
Seek their black ships, and clear the crowded strand;
All stretch'd at ease the genial banquet share,
And pleasing slumbers quiet all their care.

Not so Achilles: he to grief resign'd,
 His friend's dear image present to his mind,
 Takes his sad couch, more unobserv'd to weep,
 Nor tastes the gift of all-composing sleep,
 Restless he roll'd around his weary bed,
 And all his soul on his Patroclus fed: 10
 The form so pleasing, and the heart so kind,
 That youthful vigour, and that manly mind.
 What toils they shar'd, what martial works they wrought;
 What seas they measur'd, and what fields they fought;
 All past before him in remembrance dear, 15
 'Thought follows thought, and tear succeeds to tear.
 And now supine, now prone, the hero lay,
 Now shifts his side, impatient for the day:
 Then starting up, disconsolate he goes
 Wide on the lonely beach to vent his woes. 20
 There as the solitary mourner raves,
 The ruddy morning rises o'er the waves:
 Soon as it rose, his furious steeds he join'd;
 The chariot flies, and Hector trails behind.
 And thrice Patroclus! round thy monument 25
 Was Hector dragg'd, then hurry'd to the tent.
 There sleep at last o'ercomes the hero's eyes;
 While foul in dust th' unhonour'd carcase lies,
 But not deserted by the pitying skies. }
 For Phœbus watch'd it with superior care, }
 Preserv'd from gaping wounds, and tainting air; }
 And ignominious as it swept the field, } 30
 Spread o'er the sacred corse his golden shield.
 All heav'n was mov'd, and Hermes will'd to go
 By stealth to snatch him from th' insulting foe: 35
 But Neptune this, and Pallas this denies,
 And th' unrelenting empress of the skies:
 E'er since that day, implacable to 'Troy,
 What time young Paris, simple shepherd boy,
 Won by destructive lust, (reward obscene,) 40
 Their charms rejected for the Cyprian queen.
 But when the tenth celestial morning broke;
 'To heav'n assembled thus Apollo spoke.
 Unpitying pow'rs! how oft each holy fane
 Has Hector ting'd with blood of victims slain? 45
 And can ye still his cold remains pursue?
 Still grudge his body to the Trojans view?

Deny to consort, mother, son, and sire,
 The last sad honours of a fun'ral fire?
 Is then the dire Achilles all your care? 50
 'That iron heart, inflexibly severe;
 A lion, not a man, who slaughters wide
 In strength of rage and impotence of pride,
 Who hastes to murder with a savage joy,
 Invades around, and breathes but to destroy. 55
 Shame is not of his soul; nor understood,
 The greatest evil and the greatest good.
 Still for one loss he rages unresign'd,
 Repugnant to the lot of all mankind;
 To lose a friend, a brother, or a son, 60
 Heav'n dooms each mortal, and its will is done;
 A while they sorrow, then dismiss their care,
 Fate gives the wound, and man is born to bear.
 But this insatiate the commission giv'n
 By fate, exceeds; and tempts the wrath of heav'n: 65
 Lo how his rage dishonest drags along
 Hector's dead earth, insensible of wrong!
 Brave tho' he be, yet by no reason aw'd,
 He violates the laws of man and God.
 If equal honours by the partial skies 70
 Are doom'd both heroes, (Juno thus replies,)
 If Thetis' son must no distinction know,
 Then hear, ye gods! the patron of the bow.
 But Hector only boasts a mortal claim,
 His birth deriving from a mortal dame; 75
 Achilles of your own ethereal race
 Springs from a goddess by a man's embrace;
 (A goddess by ourself to Peleus giv'n,
 A man divine, and chosen friend of heav'n,) 80
 To grace those nuptials, from the bright abode,
 Yourselves were present; where this minstrel god,
 (Well pleas'd to share the feast,) amid the quire
 Stood proud to hymn, and tune his youthful lyre.
 Then thus the thund'rer checks th' imperial dame }
 Let not thy wrath the court of heav'n inflame; 85 }
 Their merits, not their honours, are the same.
 But mine, and ev'ry god's peculiar grace
 Hector deserves, of all the Trojan race:
 Still on our shrines his grateful off'rings lay,
 (The only honours men to gods can pay,) 90

Nor ever from our smoking altar ceast
 The pure libation, and the holy feast.
 Howe'er, by stealth to snatch the corse away
 We will not : Thetis guards it night and day.
 But haste, and summon to our courts above 95
 The azure queen ; let her persuasion move
 Her furious son from Priam to receive
 The proffer'd ransom, and the corse to leave.

He added not : and Iris from the skies,
 Swift as a whirlwind on the message flies, 100
 Meteorous the face of ocean sweeps,
 Refulgent gliding o'er the sable deeps.
 Between where Samos wide his forests spreads,
 And rocky Imbrus lifts its pointed heads,
 Down plung'd the maid ; (the parted waves resound,)
 She plung'd, and instant shut the dark profound. 106
 As bearing death in the fallacious bait
 From the bent angle sinks the leaden weight ;
 So past the goddess thro' the closing wave,
 Where Thetis sorrow'd in her secret cave : 110
 There, plac'd amidst her melancholy train,
 (The blue-hair'd sisters of the sacred main)
 Pensive she sat, revolving fates to come,
 And wept her godlike son's approaching doom.

Then thus the goddess of the painted bow : 115
 Arise, O Thetis, from thy seats below ;
 'Tis Jove that calls. And why (the dame replies)
 Calls Jove his Thetis to the hated skies ?
 Sad object as I am for heav'nly sight !
 Ah, may my sorrows ever shun the light ! 120
 Howe'er, be heav'n's almighty sire obey'd—
 She spake, and veil'd her head in sable shade,
 Which, flowing long, her graceful person clad ;
 And forth she pac'd, majestically sad.

Then thro' the world of waters, they repair 125
 (The way fair Iris led) to upper air.
 The deeps dividing, o'er the coast they rise,
 And touch with momentary flight the skies.
 There in the lightnings blaze the sire they found,
 And all the gods in shining synod round. 130
 Thetis approach'd with anguish in her face,
 (Minerya rising, gave the mourner place,)

Ev'n Juno sought her sorrows to console,
And offer'd from her hand the nectar bowl;
She tasted, and resign'd it: then began 133
The sacred sire of gods and mortal man:
Thou com'st, fair Thetis, but with grief o'ercast,
Maternal sorrows, long, ah long to last!
Suffice, we know and we partake thy cares,
But yield to fate, and hear what Jove declares. 140
Nine days are past, since all the court above
In Hector's cause have mov'd the ear of Jove;
'Twas voted, Hermes from his godlike foe
By stealth should bear him, but we will not so:
We will, thy son himself the corse restore, 145
And to his conquest add this glory more,
Then hie thee to him, and our mandate bear,
Tell him he tempts the wrath of heav'n too far:
Nor let him more, (our anger if he dread,)
Vent his mad vengeance on the sacred dead: 150
But yield to ransom and the father's pray'r.
The mournful father Iris shall prepare,
With gifts to sue; and offer'd to his hands
Whate'er his honour asks, or heart demands.
His word the silver-footed queen attends, 155
And from Olympus' snowy top descends.
Arriv'd, she heard the voice of loud lament,
And echoing groans that shook the lofty tent.
His friends prepare the victim, and dispose
Repast unheeded, while he vents his woes. 160
The goddess seats her by her pensive son,
She prest his hand, and tender thus begun:
How long, unhappy, shall thy sorrows flow!
And thy heart waste with life-consuming woe?
Mindless of food, or love whose pleasing reign 165
Sooths weary life, and softens human pain.
O snatch the moments yet within thy pow'r,
Not long to live, indulge the am'rous hour!
Lo! Jove himself, (for Jove's command I bear,)
Forbids to tempt the wrath of heav'n too far. 170
No longer then, (his fury if thou dread,)
Detain the relics of great Hector dead;
Nor vent on senseless earth thy vengeance vain,
But yield to ransom, and restore the slain.

To whom Achilles : Be the ransom giv'n, 175
And we submit, since such the will of heav'n.

While thus they commun'd, from the Olympian bow'rs,
Jove orders Iris to the Trojan tow'rs.

Haste, winged goddess ! to the sacred town,
And urge her monarch to redeem his son ; 180

Alone, the Ilian ramparts let him leave,
And bear what stern Achilles may receive :

Alone, for so we will : no Trojan near ;
Except to place the dead with decent care,

Some aged herald, who, with gentle hand, 185
May the slow mules, and fun'ral car command.

Nor let him death, nor let him danger dread
Safe thro' the foe by our protection led :

Him Hermes to Achilles shall convey,
Guard of his life, and partner of his way... 190

Fierce as he is, Achilles' self shall spare
His age, nor touch one venerable hair :

Some thought there must be, in a soul so brave,
Some sense of duty, some desire to save.

Then down her brow the winged Iris drives, 195
And swift at Priam's mournful court arrives :

Where the sad sons beside their father's throne
Sat bath'd in tears, and answer'd groan with groan.

And all amidst them lay the hoary sire,
(Sad scene of woe!) his face, his wrapt attire 200

Conceal'd from sight ; with frantic hands he spread
A show'r of ashes o'er his neck and head.

From room to room his pensive daughters roam ;
Whose shrieks and clamours fill the vaulted dome ;

Mindful of those, who, late their pride and joy, 205
Lie pale and breathless round the fields of Troy !

Before the king Jove's messenger appears,
And thus in whispers greets his trembling ears.

Fear not, oh father ! no ill news I bear ;
From Jove I come, Jove makes thee still his care : 210

For Hector's sake these walls he bids thee leave,
And bear what stern Achilles may receive ;

Alone, for so he wills : no Trojan near,
Except to place the dead with decent care,

Some aged herald, who with gentle hand, 215
May the slow mules and fun'ral car command ;

Nor shalt thou death, nor shalt thou danger dread;
 Safe thro' the foe by his protection led;
 Thee Hermes to Pelides shall convey,
 Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way. 220
 Fierce as he is, Achilles' self shall spare
 Thy age, nor touch one venerable hair:
 Some thought there must be, in a soul so brave,
 Some sense of duty, some desire to save.
 She spoke, and vanish'd. Priam bids prepare 225
 His gentle mules, and harness to the car;
 There, for the gifts, a polish'd casket lay:
 His pious sons the king's command obey.
 Then past the monarch to his bridal room,
 Where cedar-beams the lofty roofs perfume, 230
 And where the treasures of his empire lay;
 Then call'd his queen, and thus began to say:
 Unhappy consort of a king distress;
 Partake the troubles of thy husband's breast:
 I saw descend the messenger of Jove, 235
 Who bids me try Achilles' mind to move:
 Forsake these ramparts, and with gifts obtain
 The corse of Hector, at yon navy slain.
 Tell me thy thought: my heart impels to go
 Thro' hostile camps, and bears me to the foe. 240
 The hoary monarch thus. Her piercing cries
 Sad Hecuba renews, and then replies.
 Ah! whither wanders thy distemper'd mind?
 And where the prudence now that aw'd mankind?
 Thro' Phrygia once, and foreign regions known, 245
 Now all confus'd, distracted, overthrown!
 Singly to pass thro' hosts of foes! to face
 (Oli heart of steel!) the murd'rer of thy race!
 To view that deathful eye, and wander o'er
 Those hands, yet red with Hector's noble gore? 250
 Alas, my lord! he knows not how to spare,
 And what his mercy, thy slain sons declare;
 So brave! so many fall'n! to calm his rage
 Vain were thy dignity, and vain thy age.
 No—pent in this sad palace, let us give 255
 To grief, the wretched days we have to live,
 Still, still for Hector let our sorrows flow,
 Born to his own and to his parents woe!

Doom'd from the hour his luckless life begun,
To dogs, to vultures, and to Peleus' son ! 260
Oh ! in his dearest blood might I allay
My rage, and these barbarities repay !
For ah ! could Hector merit thus ? whose breath
Expir'd not meanly, in unactive death :
He pour'd his latest blood in manly fight, 265
And fell a hero in his country's right.

Seek not to stay me, nor my soul affright
With words of omen, like a bird of night;
(Reply'd unmov'd the venerable man);
'Tis heav'n commands me, and you urge in vain. 270
Had any mortal voice th' injunction laid,
Nor augur, priest, or seer had been obey'd.
A present goddess brought the high command,
I saw, I heard her, and the word shall stand.
I go, ye gods obedient to your call : 275
If in yon camp your pow'rs have doom'd my fall.
Content—By the same hand let me expire !
Add to the slaughter'd son the wretched sire !
One cold embrace at least may be allow'd,
And my last tears flow mingled with his blood ! 280

From forth his open'd stores, this said, he drew
Twelve costly carpets of refulgent hue,
As many vests, as many mantles told,
And twelve fair veils and garments stiff with gold.
Two tripods next, and twice two chargers shine, 285
With ten pure talents, from the richest mine ;
And last a large well-labour'd bowl had place,
(The pledge of treaties once with friendly Thrace),
Seem'd all too mean the stores he could employ,
For one last look to buy him back to Troy ! 290

Lo ! the sad father, frantic with his pain,
Around him furious drives his menial train ;
In vain each slave with duteous care attends,
Each office hurts him, and each face offends.
What make ye here ! officious crowds : (he cries), 295
Hence ! nor obtrude your anguish on my eyes.
Have ye no griefs at home, to fix ye there ;
Am I the only object of despair ?
Am I become my people's common show,
Set up by Jove your spectacle of woe ?

No, you must feel him too ; yourselves must fall ;
 The same stern god to ruin gives you all :
 Nor is great Hector lost by me alone ;
 Your sole defence, your guardian pow'r is gone ! 305

I see the ruins of your smoking town !
 O send me, gods ! ere that sad day shall come,
 A willing ghost to Pluto's dreary dome !

He said, and feebly drives his friends away :
 The sorrowing friends his frantic rage obey. 310

Next on his sons his erring fury falls,
 Polites, Paris, Agathon, he calls,
 His threats Deiphobus and Dius hear,
 Hippothous, Pammon, Helenus the seer,
 And gen'rous Antiphon : for yet these nine 315
 Surviv'd sad relics of his num'rous line.

Inglorious sons of an unhappy sire !
 Why did not all in Hector's cause expire ?
 Wretch that I am ! my bravest offspring slain,
 You, the disgrace of Priam's house, remain ! 320

Nestor the brave, renown'd in ranks of war,
 With Troilus, dreadful on his rushing car,
 And last great Hector, more than man divine,
 For sure he seem'd not of terrestrial line !
 All those relentless Mars untimely slew, 325

And left me these, a soft and servile crew,
 Whose days the feast and wanton dance employ,
 Gluttons and flatt'ers, the contempt of Troy !
 Why teach ye not my rapid wheels to run,
 And speed my journey to redeem my son ? 330

The sons their father's wretched age reverse,
 Forgive his anger, and produce the car.
 High on the seat the cabinet they bind :
 The new made car with solid beauty shin'd ;
 Box was the yoke, embost with costly pains, 335

And hung with ringlets to receive the reins ;
 Nine cubits long the traces swept the ground ;
 These to the chariots polish'd pole they bound,
 Then fix'd a ring the running reins to guide,
 And close beneath the gather'd ends were ty'd. 340
 Next with the gifts (he price of Hector slain),
 The sad attendants load the groaning wain ;

Last to the yoke the well-match'd mules they bring,
(The gift of Mysia to the Trojan king.)

But the fair horses, long his darling care, 345

Himself receiv'd, and harness'd to his car :

Griev'd as he was, he not this task deny'd ;

The hoary herald help'd him at his side.

While careful these the gentle coursers join'd,

Sad Hecuba approach'd with anxious mind ; 350

A golden bowl, that foam'd with fragrant wine,
(Libation destin'd to the pow'r divine,)

Held in her right, before the steeds she stands,

And thus consigns it to the monarch's hands.

Take this, and pour to Jove ; that safe from harms,

His grace restore thee to our roof, and arms. 355

Since victor of thy fears, and slighting mine,

Heav'n, or thy soul, inspire this bold design :

Pray to that god, who high on Ida's brow

Surveys thy desolated realms below, 360

His winged messenger to send from high,

And lead thy way with heav'nly augury :

Let the strong sov'reign of the plumy race

Tow'r on the right of yon ætherial-space.

That sign beheld, and strengthen'd from above, 365

Boldly pursue the journey mark'd by Jove ;

But if the god his augury denies,

Suppress thy impulse, nor reject advice.

'Tis just (said Priam) to the sire above

To raise our hands, for who so good as Jove ? 370

He spoke, and bade th' attendant handmaid bring

The purest water of the living spring :

(Her ready hands the ewer and bason held :)

Then took the golden cup his queen had fill'd ;

On the mid pavement pours the rosy wine, 375

Uplifts his eyes, and calls the pow'r divine.

O first and greatest ! heav'ns imperial lord !

On lofty Ida's holy hill ador'd !

To stern Achilles now direct my ways,

And teach him mercy when a father prays. 380

If such thy will, dispatch from yonder sky

Thy sacred bird, celestial augury !

Let the strong sov'reign of the plumy race

Tow'r on the right of yon ætherial space :

So shall thy suppliant, strengthen'd from above, 385
Fearless pursue the journey mark'd by Jove.

Jove heard his pray'r, and from the throne on high
Dispatch'd his bird, celestial augury !
'The swift-wing'd chaser of the feather'd game,
And known to gods by Pernos' lofty name. 390

Wide, as appears some palace-gate display'd,
So broad, his pinions stretch'd their ample shade,
As stooping dexter with resounding wings
'Th' imperial bird descends in airy rings. 395

A dawn of joy in ev'ry face appears :
The mourning matron dries her tim'rous tears.
Swift on his car th' impatient monarch sprung ;
The brazen portal in his passage rung.

The mules preceding draw the loaded wain,
Charg'd with the gifts : Idæus holds the rein : 400
The king himself his gentle steeds controuls,
And thro' surrounding friends the chariot rolls.

On his slow wheels the following people wait,
Mourn at each step, and give him up to fate !
With hands uplifted, eye him as he past, 405
And gaze upon him as they gaz'd their last.

Now forward fares the father on his way,
Thro' the lone fields, and back to Ilion they.
Great Jove beheld him as he crost the plain,
And felt the woes of miserable man : 410

Then thus to Hermes. 'Thou whose constant cares
Still succour mortals, and attend their pray'rs ;
Behold an object to thy charge consign'd,
If ever pity touch'd thee for mankind.

Go, guard the sire ; th' observing foe prevent, 415
And safe conduct him to Achilles' tent.

The god obeys, his golden pinions binds,
And mounts incumbent on the wings of winds,
That high thro' fields of air his flight sustain,
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main : 420

Then grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumbers seals the wakeful eye ;
Thus arm'd, swift Hermes steers his airy way,
And stoops on Hellespont's resounding sea.

A beauteous youth, majestic and divine, 425
He seem'd ; fair offspring of some princely line !

Now twilight veil'd the glaring face of day,
And clad the dusky fields in sober gray;
What time the herald and the hoary king
Their chariots stopping, at the silver spring 430
That circling Ilus' ancient marble flows,
Allow'd their mules and steeds a short repose.
Thro' the dim shade the herald first espies
A man's approach, and thus to Priam cries.
I mark some foes advance: O king! beware; 435
This hard adventure claims thy utmost care;
For much I fear destruction hovers nigh:
Our state asks counsel; is it best to fly?
Or, old and helpless, at his feet to fall,
(Two wretched suppliants,) and for mercy call? 440
Th' afflicted monarch shiver'd with despair;
Pale grew his face, and upright stood his hair;
Sunk was his heart; his colour went and came:
A sudden trembling shook his aged frame;
When Hermes greeting, touch'd his royal hand, 445
And gentle, thus accosts with kind demand.
Say whether, father! when each mortal sight
Is seal'd in sleep, thou wander'st thro' the night?
Why roam thy mules and steeds the plain along,
Thro' Grecian foes, so num'rous and so strong? 450
What could'st thou hope, should these thy treasures view,
These, who with endless hate thy race pursue?
For what defence, alas! could'st thou provide?
Thyself not young, a weak old man thy guide.
Yet suffer not thy soul to sink with dread; 455
From me no harm shall touch thy rev'rend head;
From Greece I'll guard thee too; for in those lines
The living image of my father shines.
Thy words, that speak benevolence of mind,
Are true, my son! (the godlike sire rejoin'd,) 460
Great are my hazards; but the gods survey
My steps, and send thee, guardian of my way.
Hail, and be blest! for scarce of mortal kind
Appears thy form, thy feature, and thy mind.
Nor true are all thy words, nor erring wide; 465
(The sacred messenger of heav'n reply'd:)
But say, convey'st thou thro' the lonely plains
What yet most precious of thy store remains,

To lodge in safety with some friendly hand;
 Prepar'd perchance to leave thy native land. 470
 Or fly'st thou now? what hopes can Troy retain?
 Thy matchless son, her guard and glory, slain!

The king alarm'd. Say what, and whence thou art,
 Who search the sorrows of a parent's heart,
 And know so well how godlike Hector dy'd? 475
 Thus Priam spoke, and Hermes thus reply'd.

You tempt me, father, and with pity touch:
 On this sad subject you inquire too much.
 Oft have these eyes that godlike Hector view'd
 In glorious fight with Grecian blood embru'd: 480

I saw him, when like Jove his flames he tost
 On thousand ships, and wither'd half an host:
 I saw, but help'd not: stern Achilles' ire
 Forbade assistance, and enjoy'd the sire.
 For him I serve, of Myrmidonian race; 485

One ship convey'd us from our native place;
 Polyctor is my sire, an honour'd name,
 Old like thyself, and not unknown to fame;
 Of sev'n his sons, by whom the lot was cast
 To serve our prince, it fell on me, the last. 490

To watch this quarter my adventure falls,
 For with the morn the Greeks attack your walls;
 Sleepless they sit, impatient to engage,
 And scarce their rulers check their martial rage.

If then thou art of stern Pelides' train, 495
 (The mournful monarch thus rejoin'd again,)
 Ah tell me truly, where, oh! where are laid
 My son's dear relics? what befalls him dead?
 Have dogs dismember'd on the naked plains,
 Or yet unmangled rest his cold remains? 500

O favour'd of the skies! thus answer'd then
 The pow'r that mediates between gods and men,)
 Nor dogs nor vultures have thy Hector rent,
 But whole he lies, neglected in the tent:
 This the twelfth ev'ning since he rested there, 505
 Untouch'd by worms, untainted by the air.

Still as Aurora's ruddy beam is spread,
 Round his friend's tomb Achilles drags the dead:
 Yet undisfigur'd, or in limb or face,
 All fresh he lies, with ev'ry living grace, 510

Majestical in death ! no stains are found
O'er all the corse, and clos'd is ev'ry wound ;
(Tho' many a wound they gave ;) some heav'nly care,
Some hand divine, preserves him ever fair :
Or all the host of heav'n, to whom he led 515
A life so grateful, still regard him dead.

Thus spoke to Priam the celestial guide,
And joyful thus the royal sire reply'd.

Blest is the man who pays the gods above
The constant tribute of respect and love ! 520
Those who inhabit the Olympian bow'r
My son forgot not, in exalted pow'r :
And heav'n that ev'ry virtue bears in mind,
Ev'n to the ashes of the just is kind.

But thou, oh gen'rous youth, this goblet take, 525
A pledge of gratitude for Hector's sake ;
And while the fav'ring gods our steps survey,
Safe to Pelides' tent conduct my way.

To whom the latent god. O king forbear
To tempt my youth, for apt is youth to err : 530
But can I, absent from my prince's sight,
Take gifts in secret, that must shun the light ?
What from our master's int'rest thus we draw,
Is but a licens'd theft that 'scapes the law.

Respecting him, my soul abjures th' offence ; 535
And as the crime, I dread the consequence.
Thee, far as Argos, pleas'd I could convey :
Guard of thy life, and partner of thy way.
On thee attend, thy safety to maintain,
O'er pathless forests, or the rearing main. 540

He said, then took the chariot at a bound,
And snatch'd the reins, and whirl'd the lash around :
Before th' inspiring god that urg'd them on,
The coursers fly, with spirit not their own.
And now they reach'd the naval walls, and found 545
The guards repasting, while the bowls go round ;
On these the virtue of his wand he tries,
And pours deep slumber on their watchful eyes :
Then heav'd the massy gates, remov'd the bars,
And o'er the trenches led the rolling cars, 550
Unseen thro' all the hostile camp they went,
And now approach'd Pelides' lofty tent.

On firs the roof was rais'd and cover'd o'er,
 With reeds collected from the marshy shore ;
 And, fenc'd with palisades, a hall of state, 555
 (The work of soldiers,) where the hero sat.
 Large was the door, whose well-compacted strength
 A solid pine-tree barr'd, of wond'rous length ;
 Scarce three strong Greeks could lift its mighty weight,
 But great Achilles singly clos'd the gate. 560
 This Hermes (such the pow'r of gods) set wide ;
 Then swift alighted the celestial guide.
 And thus reveal'd — Hear, prince ! and understand
 Thou ow'st thy guidance to no mortal hand :
 Hermes I am, descended from above, 565
 The king of arts, the messenger of Jove.
 Farewell ; to shun Achilles' sight I fly ;
 Uncommon are such favours of the sky,
 Nor stand confest to frail mortality. }
 Now fearless enter, and prefer thy pray'rs ; 570
 Adjure him by his father's silver hairs,
 His son, his mother ! urge him to bestow
 Whatever pity that stern heart can know.
 Thus having said, he vanish'd from his eyes,
 And in a moment shot into the skies : 575
 The king, confirm'd from heav'n, alighted there,
 And left his aged herald on the car.
 With solemn pace thro' various rooms he went,
 And found Achilles in his inner tent :
 There sat the hero ; Alcimus the brave, 580
 And great Automedon, attendance gave :
 These serv'd his person at the royal feast,
 Around at awful distance, stood the rest.
 Unseen by these, the king his entry made ;
 And prostrate now before Achilles laid, 585
 Sudden (a venerable sight !) appears ;
 Embrac'd his knees, and bath'd his hands in tears ;
 Those direful hands his kisses press'd, embru'd
 Ev'n with the best, the dearest of his blood !
 As when a wretch, (who, conscious of his crime, 590
 Pursu'd for murder, flies his native clime,)
 Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale, amaz'd !
 All gaze, all wonder ! thus Achilles gaz'd :
 Thus stood th' attendants, stupid with surprize :
 All mute, yet seem'd to question with their eyes ! 595

Each look'd on other, none the silence broke,
Till thus at last the kingly suppliant spoke.

Ah think thou favour'd of the pow'rs divine!

Think of thy father's age, and pity mine!

In me, that father's rev'rend image trace, 600

Those silver hairs, that venerable face;

His trembling limbs, his helpless person, see!

In all my equal but in misery!

Yet now perhaps, some turn of human fate

Expels him helpless from his peaceful state; 605

Think, from some pow'rful foe thou seest him fly,

And beg protection with a feeble cry.

Yet still one comfort in his soul may rise;

He hears his son still lives to glad his eyes;

And hearing still may hope, a better day 610

May send him thee, to chase that foe away.

No comfort to my griefs, no hopes remain,

The best the bravest of my sons are slain!

Yet what a race! ere Greece to Ilion came,

The pledge of many a lov'd, and loving dame: 615

Nineteen one mother bore—Dead, all are dead

How oft, alas! has wretched Priam bled?

Still one was left, their loss to recompence;

His father's hope, his country's last defence.

Him too thy rage has slain! beneath thy steel, 620

Unhappy, in his country's cause he fell?

For him thro' hostile camps I bent my way,

For him thus prostrate at thy feet I lay;

Large gifts proportion'd to thy wrath I bear;

O hear the wretched, and the gods revere! 625

Think of thy father, and this face behold!

See him in me as helpless and as old!

Tho' not so wretched: there he yields to me,

The first of men in sov'reign misery.

Thus forc'd to kneel, thus grov'ling to embrace 630

The scourge and ruin of my realm and race:

Suppliant my children's murd'rer to implore,

And kiss those hands yet reeking with their gore!

These words soft pity in the chief inspire,

Touch'd with the dear remembrance of his sire. 635

Then with his hand (as prostrate still he lay)

'The old man's cheek he gently turn'd away.

Now each by turns indulg'd the gush of woe ;
 And now the mingled tides together flow :
 This low on earth, that gently bending o'er ; 640
 A father one, and one a son deplore ;
 But great Achilles diff'rent passions rend,
 And now his sire he mourns, and now his friend.
 Th' infectious softness thro' the heroes ran ;
 One universal solemn show'r began ; 645 }
 They bore as heroes, but they felt as man.

Satiate at length with unavailing woes,
 From the high throne divine Achilles rose ;
 The rev'rend monarch by the hand he rais'd ;
 On his white beard and form majestic gaz'd, 650
 Not unrelenting : then serene began
 With words to soothe the miserable man.

Alas ! what weight of anguish hast thou known !
 Unhappy prince ! thus guardless and alone
 To pass thro' foes, and thus undaunted face 655
 The man whose fury has destroy'd thy race ?
 Heav'n sure has arm'd thee with a heart of steel,
 A strength proportion'd to the woes you feel.
 Rise then : let reason mitigate our care :
 To mourn, avails not ; man is born to bear. 660
 Such is, alas ! the gods severe decree ;
 They, only they are blest, and only free.
 Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
 The source of evil one, and one of good ;
 From thence the cup of mortal man he fills, 665
 Blessings to these, to those distributes ill ;
 'To most, he mingles both : the wretch decreed
 To taste the bad, unmix'd, is curst indeed ;
 Pursu'd by wrongs, by meagre famine driv'n,
 He wanders, outcast both of earth and heav'n. 670
 The happiest taste not happiness sincere,
 But find the cordial draught is dash'd with care.
 Who more than Peleus shone in wealth and pow'r !
 What stars concurring blest his natal hour !
 A realm, a goddess, to his wishes giv'n, 675
 Grac'd by the gods with all the gifts of heav'n !
 One evil yet o'ertakes his latest day,
 No race succeeding to imperial sway :
 An only son ! and he (alas !) ordain'd
 'To fall untimely in a foreign land !

See him, in Troy, the pious care decline
 Of his weak age, to live the curse of thine !
 Thou too, old man, hast happier days beheld ;
 In riches once, in children once excell'd ;
 Extended Phrygia own'd thy ample reign, 685 }
 And all fair Lesbo's blissful seats contain,
 And all wide Hellespont's unmeasur'd main. }
 But since the god his hand has pleas'd to turn,
 And fill thy measure from his bitter urn,
 What sees the sun, but hapless heroes falls ? 690
 War, and the blood of men, surround thy walls !
 What must be, must be. Bear thy lot, nor shed
 These unavailing sorrows o'er the dead ;
 Thou canst not call him from the Stygian shore,
 But thou, alas ! may'st live to suffer more ! 695
 To whom the king. O favour'd of the skies !
 Here let me grow to earth ! since Hector lies
 On the bare beach, ~~depriv'd of obsequies.~~ }
 O give me Hector ! to my eyes restore
 His corse, and take the gifts : I ask no more. 700
 Thou, as thou may'st, these boundless stores enjoy ;
 Safe may'st thou sail, and turn thy wrath from Troy ;
 So shall thy pity and forbearance give
 A weak old man to see the light and live !
 Move me no more, (Achilles thus replies, 705
 While kindling anger sparkled in his eyes,)
 Nor seek by tears my steady soul to bend,
 To yield thy Hector I myself intend :
 For know, from Jove my goddess-mother came,
 (Old Ocean's daughter, silver-footed dame) 710
 Nor com'st thou but by heav'n ; nor com'st alone,
 Some god impels with courage not thy own ;
 No human hand the weighty gates unbarr'd.
 Nor could the boldest of our youth have dar'd }
 To pass our out-works, or elude the guard. 715 }
 Cease, lest neglectful of high Jove's command,
 I show thee, king ! thou tread'st on hostile land ;
 Release my knees, thy suppliant arts give o'er,
 And shake the purpose of my soul no more.
 The sire obey'd him, trembling and o'er-aw'd. 720
 Achilles, like a lion, rush'd abroad :
 Automedon and Alcimus attend,
 (Whom most he honour'd, since he lost his friend,

These to unyoke the mules and horses went,
 And led the hoary herald to the tent; 725
 Next heap'd on high the num'rous presents bear
 (Great Hector's ransom) from the polish'd car.
 Two splendid mantles, and a carpet spread,
 They leave; to cover and inwrap the dead.
 Then call the handmaids, with assistant toil 730
 To wash the body and anoint with oil;
 Apart from Priam, lest th' unhappy sire,
 Provok'd to passion, once more rouse to ire
 The stern Pelides; and nor sacred age
 Nor Jove's command, should check the rising rage. 735
 'This done, the garments o'er the corse they spread;
 Achilles lifts it to the fun'ral bed:
 Then, while the body on the car they laid,
 He groans, and calls on lov'd Patroclus' shade.
 If, in that gloom which never light must know, 740
 The deeds of mortals touch the ghosts below;
 O friend! forgive me, that I thus fulfil
 (Restoring Hector) heav'n's unquestion'd will.
 The gifts the father gave, be ever thine,
 To grace thy manes, and adorn thy shrine. 745
 He said, and ent'ring, took his seat of state,
 Where full before him rev'rend Priam sat;
 To whom, compos'd, the godlike chief begun.
 Lo! to thy pray'r restor'd, thy breathless son:
 Extended on the fun'ral couch he lies; 750
 And soon as morning paints the eastern skies,
 The sight is granted to thy longing eyes.
 But now the peaceful hours of sacred night
 Demand refection, and to rest invite:
 Nor thou, O father! thus consum'd with woe, 755
 The common cares that nourish life, forego.
 Not thus did Niobe, of form divine,
 A parent once, whose sorrows equall'd thine:
 Six youthful sons, as many blooming maids,
 In one sad day beheld the Stygian shades; 760
 These by Apollo's silver bow were slain,
 Those, Cynthia's arrows stretch'd upon the plain.
 So was her pride chastis'd by wrath divine,
 Who match'd her own with bright Latona's line;
 But two the goddess, twelve the queen enjoy'd; 765
 Those boasted twelve th' avenging two destroy'd.

Steep'd in their blood, and in the dust outspread,
 Nine days neglected lay expos'd the dead;
 None by to weep them, to inhume them none;
 (For Jove had turn'd the nations all to stone :) 770
 The gods themselves at length relenting, gave
 Th' unhappy race the honours of a grave.
 Herself a rock (for such was heav'n's high will,)
 Thro' desarts wild now pours a weeping rill;
 Where round the bed whence Achelous springs, 775
 The watry fairies dance in mazy rings,
 There high on Sipylus his shaggy brow,
 She stands her own sad monument of woe;
 The rock for ever lasts, the tears for ever flow. }

Such griefs, O king! have other parent's known;
 Remember theirs, and mitigate thy own. 781
 The care of heav'n thy Hector has appear'd,
 Nor shall he lie unwept, and uninterr'd;
 Soon may thy aged cheeks in tears be drown'd,
 And all the eyes of Ilion stream around. 785

He said, and rising, chose the victim-ewe
 With silver fleece, which is attendants slew.
 The limbs they severe from the reeking hide,
 With skill prepare them, and in parts divide;
 Each on the coals the sep'rate morsels lays, 790
 And, hasty, snatches from the rising blaze.
 With bread the glitt'ring canisters they load,
 Which round the board Automedon bestow'd:
 The chief himself to each his portion plac'd,
 And each indulging shar'd in sweet repast. 795
 When now the rage of hunger was repress,
 The wond'ring hero eyes his royal guest;
 No less the royal guest the hero eyes,
 His godlike aspect and majestic size:
 Here, youthful grace and noble fire engage, 800
 And there, the mild benevolence of age.
 Thus gazing long, the silence neither broke,
 (A solemn scene!) at length the father spoke.

Permit me now, belov'd of Jove! to steep
 My careful temples in the dew of sleep: 805
 For since the day that number'd with the dead
 My hapless son, the dust has been my bed,
 Soft sleep a stranger to my weeping eyes,
 My only food, my sorrows and my sighs!

Till now, encourag'd by the grace you give, 810
I share thy banquet, and consent to live.

With that Achilles bade prepare the bed,
With purple soft, and shaggy carpets spread;
Forth, by the flaming lights, they bend their way
And place the couches, and the cov'nings lay. 815

Then he : Now father sleep, but sleep not here,
Consult thy safety, and forgive my fear,
Least any Argive, (at this hour awake,
To ask our counsel, or our orders take,) 820
Approaching sudden to our open'd tent,

Perchance behold thee, and our grace prevent.
Should such report thy honour'd person here,
The king of men the ransom might defer ;
But say, with speed, if ought of thy desire
Remains unask'd ; what time the rites require 825

T' inter thy Hector ? For, so long we stay
Our slaught'ring arm, and bid the hosts obey.

If then thy will permit, (the monarch said,)
To finish all due honours to the dead,
This, if thy grace accord : to thee are known 830

The fears of Iliou, clos'd within her town,
And at what distance from our walls aspire
The hills of Ide, and forests for the fire.
Nine days to vent our sorrows I request,
The tenth shall see the fun'ral and the feast : 835

The next, to raise his monument be giv'n,
The twelfth we war, if war be doom'd by heav'n !
This thy request, (reply'd the chief,) enjoy :
Till then, our arms suspend the fall of Troy.

Then gave his hand at parting, to prevent 840
The old man's fears, and turn'd within the tent :
Where fair Briseis, bright in blooming charms,
Expects her hero with desiring arms.

But in the porch the king and herald rest,
Sad dreams of care yet wand'ring in their breast. 845
Now gods and men the gifts of sleep partake,
Industrious Hermes only was awake,

The king's return revolving in his mind,
To pass the ramparts, and the watch to blind,
The pow'r descending hover'd o'er his head : 850
And sleep'st thou, father ! (thus the vision said ;)

Now dost thou sleep, when Hector is restor'd !
 Nor fear the Grecian foes, or Grecian lord !
 Thy presence here should stern Atrides see,
 Thy still-surviving sons may sue for thee, 855
 May offer all thy treasures yet contain,
 To spare thy age : and offer all in vain.

Wak'd with the word, the trembling sire arose,
 And rais'd his friend : the god before him goes,
 He joins the mules, directs them with his hand, 860
 And moves in silence thro' the hostile land.

When now to Xanthus' yellow stream they drove,
 (Xanthus, immortal progeny of Jove,)
 The winged deity forsook their view,
 And in a moment to Olympus flew. 865

Now shed Aurora round her saffron ray,
 Sprung thro' the gates of light, and gave the day :
 Charg'd with their mournful load, to Ilion go
 The sage and king majestically slow.

Cassandra first beholds, from Ilion's spire, 870

The sad procession of her hoary sire,
 Then as the pensive pomp advanc'd more near,
 Her breathless brother stretch'd upon the bier :
 A show'r of tears o'erflow her beauteous eyes,
 Alarming thus all Ilion with her cries. 875

Turn here your steps, and here your eyes employ,
 Ye wretched daughters, and ye sons of Troy ;
 If e'er ye rush'd in crowds, with vast delight,
 To hail your hero glorious from the fight ;
 Now meet him dead, and let your sorrows flow ! 880
 Your common triumph, and your common woe.

In thronging crowds they issue to the plains,
 Nor man, nor woman, in the walls remains,
 In ev'ry face the self-same grief is shown,
 And Troy sends forth one universal groan. 885

At Scæa's gates they meet the mourning wain,
 Hang on the wheels, and grovel round the slain.

The wife and mother, frantic with despair,
 Kiss his pale cheek, and rend their scatter'd hair :
 Thus wildly wailing, at the gates they lay, 890

And there had sigh'd and sorrow'd out the day ;
 But godlike Priam from the chariot rose ;
 Forbear (he cry'd) this violence of woes ;

First to the palace let the car proceed,
Then pour your boundless sorrows o'er the dead. 895

The waves of people at his word divide,
Slow rolls the chariot thro' the following tide ;
Ev'n to the palace the sad pomp they wait :
They weep, and place him on the bed of state.
A melancholy choir attend around, 900
With plaintive sighs, and music's solemn sound :
Alternately they sing, alternate flow
'Th' obedient tears, melodious in their woe.
While deeper sorrows groan from each full heart,
And nature speaks at ev'ry pause of art. 905

First to the corse the weeping consort flew ;
Around his neck her milk-white arms she threw,
And, oh my Hector ! oh my Lord ! she cries,
Snatch'd in thy bloom from these desiring eyes !
Thou to the dismal realms for ever gone ! 910
And I abandon'd, desolate, alone !

An only son, once comfort of our pains,
Sad product now of hapless love remains !
Never to manly age that son shall rise,
Or with increasing graces glad my eyes ; 915
For Ilion now (her great defender slain)
Shall sink a smoking ruin on the plain.

Who now protects her wives with guardian care ?
Who saves her infants from the rage of war ?
Now hostile fleets must waft those infants o'er, 920
(Those wives must wait 'em) to a foreign shore !
'Thou too, my son ! to barb'rous climes shalt go,
The sad companion of thy mother's woe ;
Driv'n hence a slave before the victor's sword,
Condemn'd to toil for some inhuman lord. 925

Or else some Greek whose father prest the plain,
Or son, or brother, by great Hector slain,
In Hector's blood his vengeance shall enjoy,
And hurl thee headlong from the tow'rs of Troy.
For thy stern father never spar'd a foe : 930
Thence all these tears, and all this scene of woe !

Thence many evils his sad parents bore,
His parents many, but his consort more.
Why gav'st thou not to me thy dying hand ?
And why receiv'd not I thy last command ? 935

Some word thou would'st have spoke, which sadly dear
 My soul might keep, or utter with a tear ;
 Which never, never, could be lost in air,
 Fix'd in my heart, and oft repeated there !

Thus to her weeping maids she makes her moan ;
 Her weeping handmaids echo groan for groan. 941

The mournful mother next sustains her part.
 O thou, the best, the dearest to my heart !
 Of all my race thou most by heav'n approv'd,
 And by th' immortals ev'n in death belov'd ! 945

While all my other sons in barb'rous bands,
 Achilles bound, and sold to foreign lands,
 This felt no chains, but went a glorious ghost
 Free, and a hero to the Stygian coast,
 Sentenc'd, 'tis true, by his inhuman doom, 950

Thy noble corse was dragg'd around the tomb,
 (The tomb of him thy warlike arm had slain,)
 Ungen'rous insult, impotent and vain !
 Yet glow'st thou fresh with ev'ry living grace,
 No mark of pain, or violence of face ; 955

Rosy and fair ! as Phœbus' silver bow
 Dismiss'd thee gently to the shades below.

Thus spoke the dame, and melted into tears.
 Sad Helen next in pomp of grief appears :
 Fast from the shining sluices of her eyes 960
 Fall the round crystal drops, while thus she cries.

Ah dearest friend ! in whom the gods had join'd
 The mildest manners with the bravest mind ;
 Now twice ten years (unhappy years) are o'er,
 Since Paris brought me to the Trojan shore ; 965

(Oh had I perish'd, ere that form divine
 Seduc'd this soft, this easy heart of mine !)
 Yet was it ne'er my fate, from thee to find
 A deed ungentle, or a word unkind :

When others curst the authress of their woe, 970
 Thy pity check'd my sorrows in their flow :

If some proud brother ey'd me with disdain,
 Or scornful sister with her sweeping train, }
 Thy gentle accents soften'd all my pain. }

For thee I mourn ; and mourn myself in thee, 975
 The wretched source of all this misery !

The fate I caus'd for ever I bemoan ;
 Sad Helen has no friend now thou art gone !
 Thro' Troy's wide streets abandon'd shall I roam !
 In Troy deserted, as abhorr'd at home. 980

So spoke the fair, with sorrow-streaming eye,
 Distressful beauty melts each stander-by ;
 On all around th' infectious sorrow grows ;
 But Priam check'd the torrent as it rose.
 Perform, ye Trojans ! what the rites require, 985
 And fell the forests for a fun'ral pyre ;
 Twelve days, nor foes, nor secret ambush dread,
 Achilles grants these honours to the dead.

He spoke ; and, at his word, the Trojan train
 Their mules and oxen harness to the wain, 990
 Pour thro' the gates, and fell'd from Ida's crown,
 Roll back the gather'd forests to the town.
 These toils continue nine succeeding days,
 And high in air a sylvan structure raise.

But when the tenth fair morn began to shine, 995
 Forth to the pile was borne the man divine,
 And plac'd aloft while all, with streaming eyes,
 Beheld the flames and rolling smokes arise.

Soon as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
 With rosy lustre streak'd the dewy lawn ; 1000

Again the mournful crowds surround the pyre,
 And quench with wine the yet remaining fire ;
 The snowy bones his friends and brothers place
 (With tears collected) in a golden vase ;

The golden vase in purple palls they roll'd, 1005
 Of softest texture, and inwrought with gold.

Last o'er the urn the sacred earth they spread,
 And rais'd the tomb memorial of the dead.

(Strong guards and spies, till all the rites were done,
 Watch'd from the rising to the setting sun :) 1010

All Troy then moves to Priam's court again,
 A solemn, silent, melancholy train :

Assembled there, from pious toils the rest,
 And sadly shar'd the last sepulchral feast.

Such honours Ilion to her hero paid, 1015
 And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade.

The End of the ILIAD.

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